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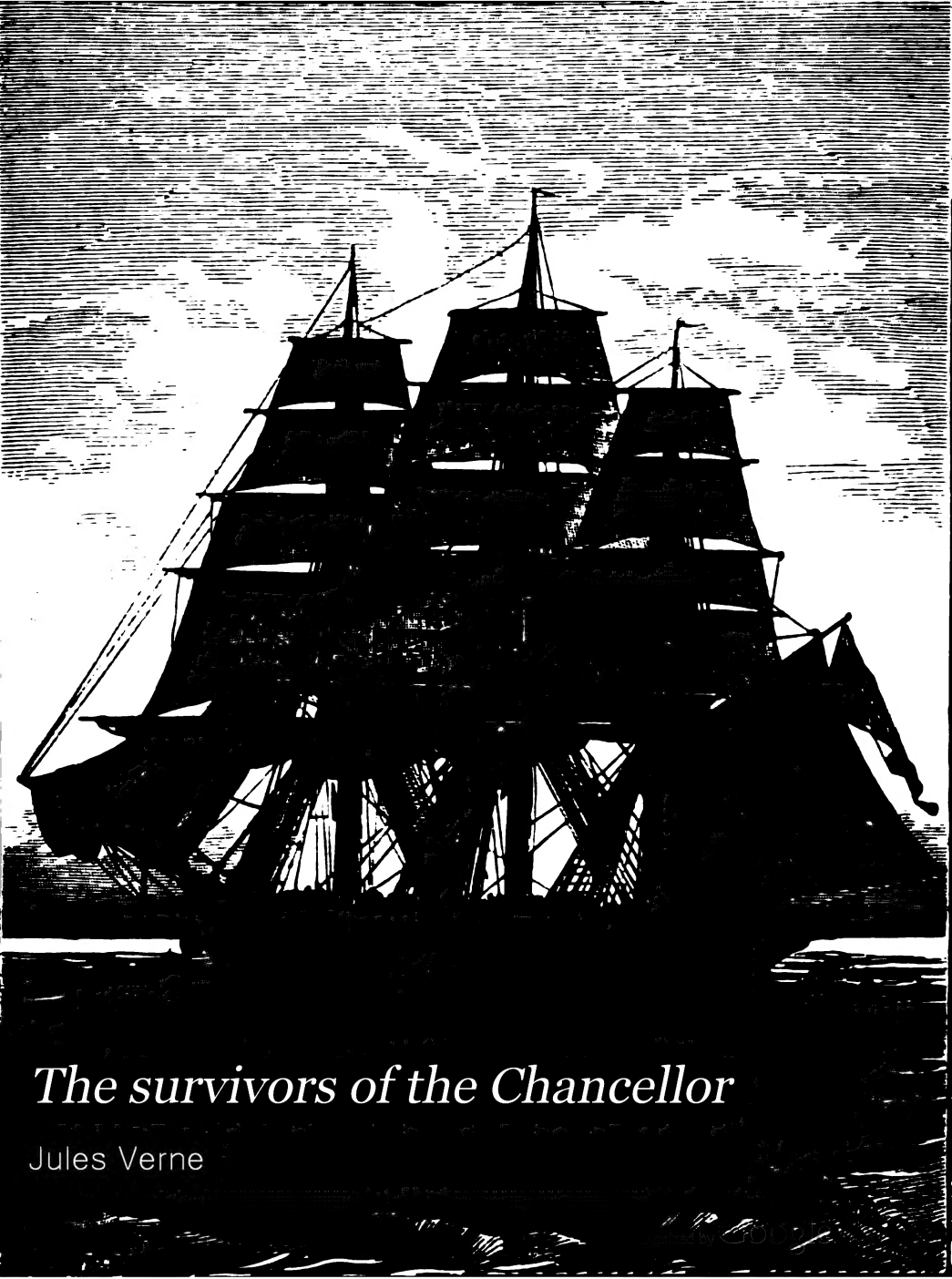

The survivors of the Chancellor

Jules Verne

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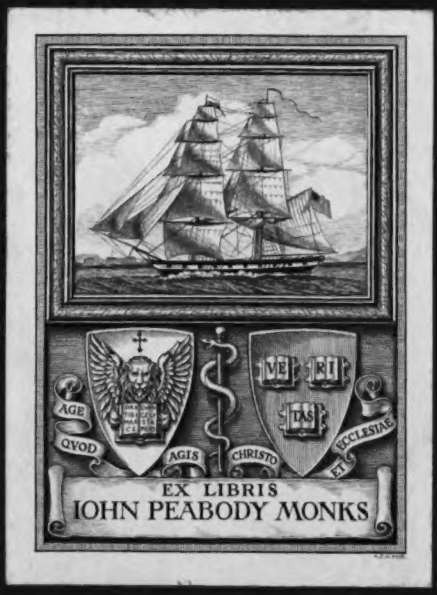

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NEITHER BY DAY NOR NIGHT DID THE FATHER AND THE LOVER PERMIT THEMSELVES TO REST.

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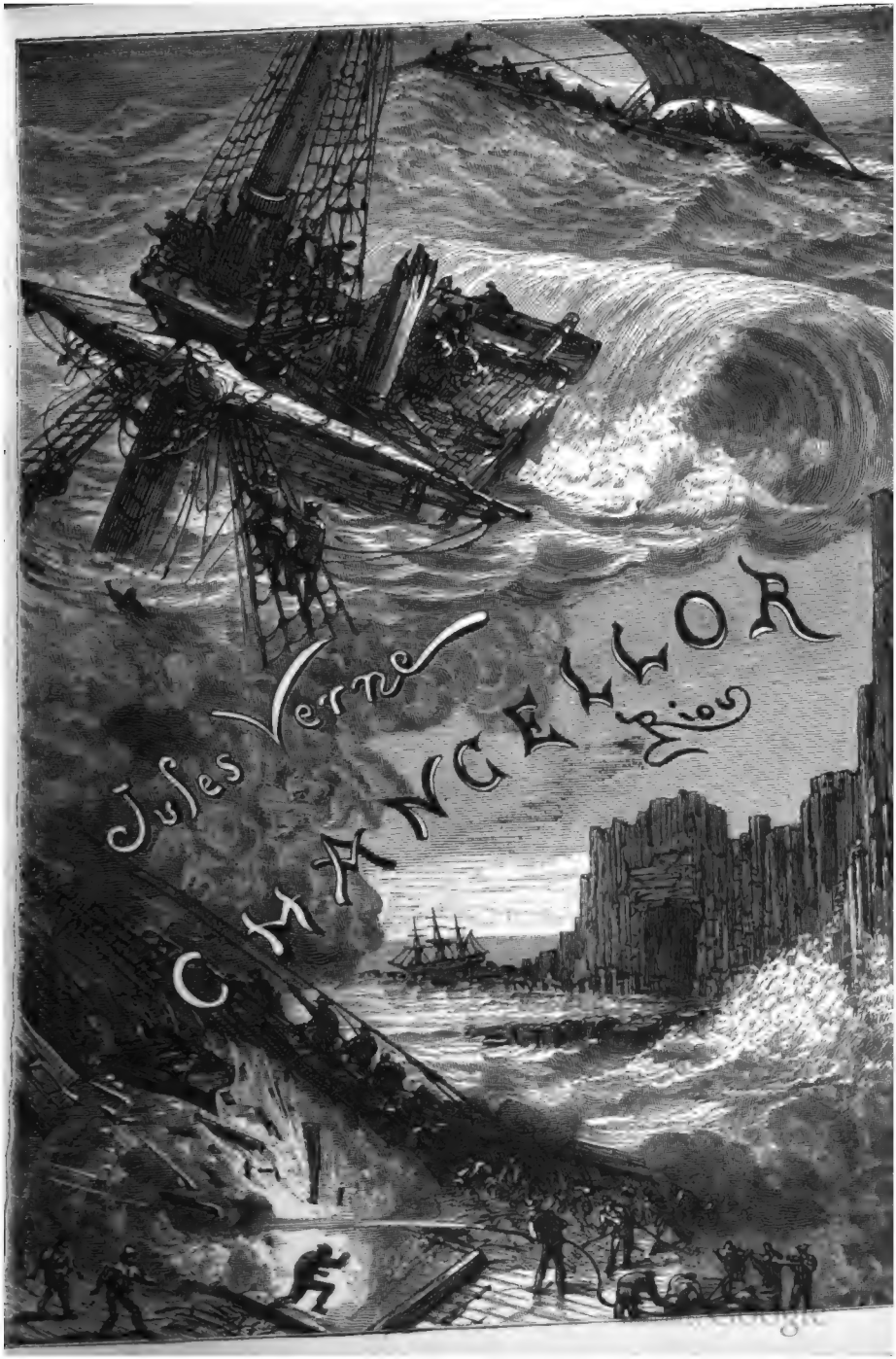
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CHANCELLOR

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THE

SURVIVORS OF THE CHANCELLOR

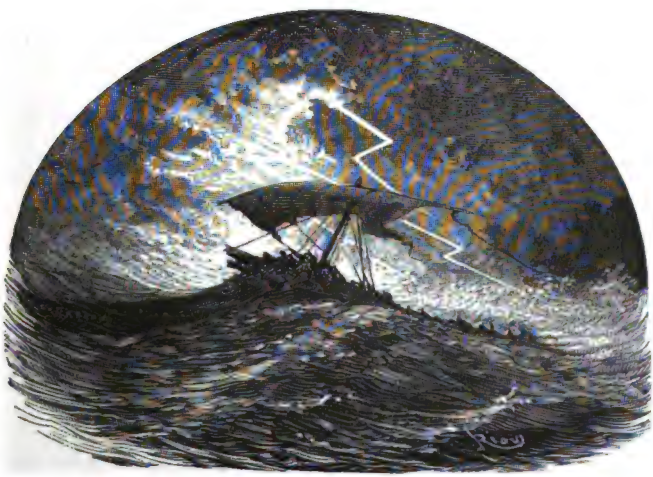
DIARY OF J. R. KAZALLON, PASSENGER

BY

JULES VERNE

AUTHOR OF "TWENTY THOUSAND LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA," "AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHTY DAYS," "THE FUR COUNTRY," ETC., ETC.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY
ELLEN FREWER



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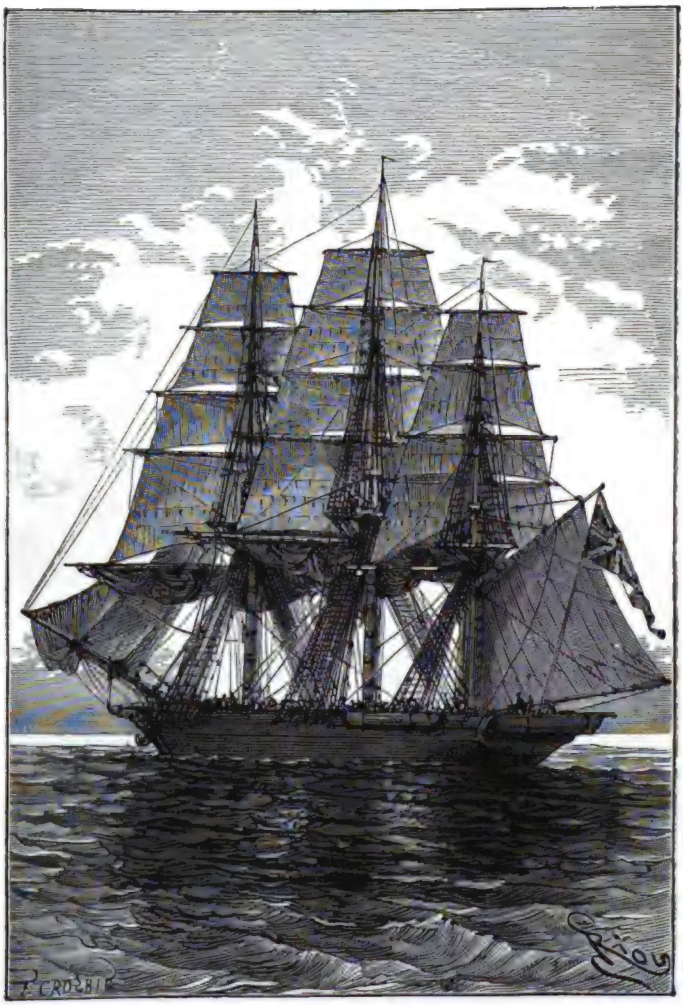

"THE NORTHERLY BREEZE DRIVES THE 'CHANCELLOR' BRISKLY ACROSS THE BAY."

Page 1.

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THE SURVIVORS OF THE CHANCELLOR.

DIARY OF J. R. KAZALLON, PASSENGER.

CHAPTER I.

Charleston, September 27th, 1869.—It is high tide, and three o'clock in the afternoon when we leave the Battery-quay; the ebb carries us off shore, and as Captain Huntly has hoisted both main and top sails, the northerly breeze drives the "Chancellor" briskly across the bay. Fort Sumter ere long is doubled, the sweeping batteries of the mainland on our left are soon passed, and by four o'clock the rapid current of the ebbing tide has carried us through the harbour-mouth.

But as yet we have not reached the open sea; we have still to thread our way through the narrow channels which the surge has hollowed out amongst the sand-banks. The captain takes a south-west course, rounding the lighthouse

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at the corner of the fort; the sails are closely trimmed; the last sandy point is safely coasted, and at length, at seven o'clock in the evening, we are out free upon the wide Atlantic.

The "Chancellor" is a fine square-rigged three-master, of 900 tons burden, and belongs to the wealthy Liverpool firm of Laird Brothers. She is two years old, is sheathed and secured with copper, her decks being of teak, and the base of all her masts, except the mizen, with all their fittings, being of iron. She is registered first class A 1, and is now on her third voyage between Charleston and Liverpool. As she wended her way through the channels of Charleston harbour, it was the British flag that was lowered from her mast-head; but without colours at all, no sailor could have hesitated for a moment in telling her nationality,—for English she was, and nothing but English from her water-line upwards to the truck of her masts.

I must now relate how it happens that I have taken my passage on board the "Chancellor" on her return voyage to England.

At present there is no direct steamship service between South Carolina and Great Britain, and all who wish to cross must go either northwards to New York or southwards to New Orleans. It is quite true that if I had chosen to start from New York I might have found plenty of vessels belonging to English, French, or Hamburg lines, any of

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which would have conveyed me by a rapid voyage to my destination; and it is equally true that if I had selected New Orleans for my embarcation I could readily have reached Europe by one of the vessels of the National Steam Navigation Company, which join the French Transatlantic line of Colon and Aspinwall. But it was fated to be otherwise.

One day, as I was loitering about the Charleston quays, my eye lighted upon this vessel. There was something about the "Chancellor" that pleased me, and a kind of involuntary impulse took me on board, where I found the internal arrangements perfectly comfortable. Yielding to the idea that a voyage in a sailing vessel had certain charms beyond the transit in a steamer, and reckoning that with wind and wave in my favour there would be little material difference in time; considering, moreover, that in these low latitudes the weather in early autumn is fine and unbroken, I came to my decision, and proceeded forthwith to secure my passage by this route to Europe.

Have I done right or wrong? Whether I shall have reason to regret my determination is a problem to be solved in the future. However, I will begin to record the incidents of our daily experience, dubious as I feel whether the lines of my chronicle will ever find a reader.

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CHAPTER II.

September 28th.—John Silas Huntly, the captain of the "Chancellor," has the reputation of being an experienced navigator of the Atlantic. He is a Scotchman, a native of Dundee, and is about fifty years of age. He is of middle height and slight build, and has a small head, which he has a habit of holding a little over his left shoulder. I do not pretend to be much of a physiognomist, but I am inclined to believe that my few hours' acquaintance with our captain has given me considerable insight into his character. That he is a good seaman and thoroughly understands his duties I could not for a moment venture to deny; but that he is a man of resolute temperament, or that he possesses the amount of courage that would render him, physically or morally, capable of coping with any great emergency, I confess I cannot believe. I observe a certain heaviness and dejection about his whole carriage. His wavering glances, the listless motions of his hands, and

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his slow, unsteady gait, all seem to me to indicate a weak and sluggish disposition. He does not appear as though he could be energetic enough ever to be stubborn; he never frowns, sets his teeth, or clenches his fist. There is something enigmatical about him; however, I shall study him closely and do what I can to understand the man who, as commander of a vessel, should be to those around him "second only to God."

Unless I am greatly mistaken there is another man on board who, if circumstances should require it, would take the more prominent position—I mean the mate. I have hitherto, however, had such little opportunity of observing his character, that I must defer saying more about him at present.

Besides the captain and this mate, whose name is Robert Curtis, our crew consists of Walter, the lieutenant, the boatswain, and fourteen sailors, all English or Scotch, making eighteen altogether, a number quite sufficient for working a vessel of 900 tons burden. Up to this time my sole experience of their capabilities is, that under the command of the mate, they brought us skilfully enough through the narrow channels of Charleston; and I have no reason to doubt but that they are well up to their work.

My list of the ship's officials is incomplete unless I mention Hobart, the steward, and Jynxstrop, the negro cook.

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In addition to these, the "Chancellor" carries eight passengers, including myself. Hitherto, the bustle of embarkation, the arrangement of cabins, and all the variety of preparations inseparable from starting on a voyage for at least twenty or five-and-twenty days have precluded the formation of any acquaintanceships; but the monotony of the voyage, the close proximity into which we must be thrown, and the natural curiosity to know something of each other's affairs, will doubtless lead us in due time to an interchange of ideas. Two days have elapsed and I have not even seen all the passengers. Probably sea-sickness has prèvented some of them from making their appearance at the common table. One thing, however, I do know; namely, that there are two ladies occupying the stern-cabins, the windows of which are in the aft-board of the vessel.

I have seen the ship's list, and subjoin a list of the passengers. They are as follow:—

Mr. and Mrs. Kear, Americans, of Buffalo.

Miss Herbey, a young English lady, companion to Mrs. Kear.

M. Letourneur and his son André, Frenchmen, of Havre.

William Falsten, a Manchester engineer.

John Ruby, a Cardiff merchant; and myself, J. R. Kazallon, of London.

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"THE PASSENGERS OF THE CHANCELLOR."

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CHAPTER III.

September 29th.—Captain Huntly's bill of lading, that is to say, the document that describes the "Chancellor's" cargo and the conditions of transport, is couched in the following terms:—

"*Bronsfield and Co., Agents, Charleston.*

"I, John Silas Huntly, of Dundee, Scotland, commander of the ship 'Chancellor,' of about 900 tons burden, now at Charleston, do purpose, by the blessing of God, at the earliest convenient season, and by the direct route, to sail for the port of Liverpool, where I shall obtain my discharge. I do hereby acknowledge that I have received from you, Messrs. Bronsfield and Co., Commission Agents, Charleston, and have placed the same under the gun-deck of the aforesaid ship, seventeen hundred bales of cotton, of the estimated value of 26,000*l.*, all in good condition, marked and numbered as in the margin; which goods I do under-

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take to transport to Liverpool, and there to deliver, free from injury (save only such injury as shall have been caused by the chances of the sea), to Messrs. Laird Brothers, or to their order, or to their representative, who shall on due delivery of the said freight pay me the sum of 2000*l.* inclusive, according to the charter-party, and damages in addition, according to the usages and customs of the sea.

"And for the fulfilment of the above covenant, I have pledged and do pledge my person, my property, and my interest in the vessel aforesaid, with all its appurtenances. In witness whereof, I have signed three agreements, all of the same purport, on the condition that when the terms of one are accomplished, the other two shall be absolutely null and void.

"Given at Charleston, September 13th, 1869,

"J. S. HUNTLY."

From the foregoing document it will be understood that the "Chancellor" is conveying 17,000 bales of cotton to Liverpool; that the shippers are Bronsfield, of Charleston, and the consignees are Laird Brothers, of Liverpool. The ship was constructed with the especial design of carrying cotton, and the entire hold, with the exception of a very limited space reserved for passengers' luggage, is closely packed with the bales. The lading was performed with

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the utmost care, each bale being pressed into its proper place by the aid of screw-jacks, so that the whole freight forms one solid and compact mass; not an inch of space is wasted, and the vessel is thus made capable of carrying her full complement of cargo.

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CHAPTER IV.

September 30th to October 6th.—The "Chancellor" is a rapid sailer, and more than a match for many a vessel of the same dimensions. She scuds along merrily in the freshening breeze, leaving in her wake, far as the eye can reach, a long white line of foam as well defined as a delicate strip of lace stretched upon an azure ground.

The Atlantic is not visited by many gales, and I have every reason to be believe that the rolling and pitching of the vessel no longer incommode any of the passengers, who are all more or less accustomed to the sea. A vacant seat at our table is now very rare; we are beginning to know something about each other, and our daily life, in consequence, is becoming somewhat less monotonous.

M. Letourneur, our French fellow-passenger, often has a chat with me. He is a fine tall man, about fifty years of age, with white hair and a grizzly beard. To say the truth, he looks older than he really is: his drooping head, his

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dejected manner, and his eye, ever and again suffused with tears, indicate that he is haunted by some deep and abiding sorrow. He never laughs; he rarely even smiles, and then only on his son: his countenance ordinarily bearing a look of bitterness tempered by affection, while his general expression is one of caressing tenderness. It excites an involuntary commiseration to learn that M. Letourneur is consuming himself by exaggerated reproaches on account of the infirmity of an afflicted son.

André Letourneur is about twenty years of age, with a gentle, interesting countenance, but, to the irrepressible grief of his father, is a hopeless cripple. His left leg is miserably deformed, and he is quite unable to walk without the assistance of a stick. It is obvious that the father's life is bound up with that of his son; his devotion is unceasing; every thought, every glance is for André; he seems to anticipate his most trifling wish, watches his slightest movement, and his arm is ever ready to support or otherwise assist the child whose sufferings he more than shares.

M. Letourneur seems to have taken a peculiar fancy to myself, and constantly talks about André. This morning, in the course of conversation, I said,—

"You have a good son, M. Letourneur. I have just been talking to him. He is a most intelligent young man."

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"Yes, Mr. Kazallon," replied M. Letourneur, brightening up into a smile, "his afflicted frame contains a noble mind. He is like his mother, who died at his birth."

"He is full of reverence and love for you, sir," I remarked.

"Dear boy!" muttered the father half to himself. "Ah, Mr. Kazallon," he continued, "you do not know what it is to a father to have a son a cripple, beyond hope of cure."

"M. Letourneur," I answered, "you take more than your share of the affliction which has fallen upon you and your son. That M. André is entitled to the very greatest commiseration no one can deny; but you should remember, that after all a physical infirmity is not so hard to bear as mental grief. Now, I have watched your son pretty closely, and unless I am much mistaken there is nothing that troubles him so much as the sight of your own sorrow."

"But I never let him see it," he broke in hastily. "My sole thought is how to divert him. I have discovered, that in spite of his physical weakness, he delights in travelling; so for the last few years we have been constantly on the move. We first went all over Europe, and are now returning from visiting the principal places in the United States. I never allowed my son to go to college, but instructed him entirely myself, and these travels, I hope, will serve to complete his education. He is very intelligent, and has a

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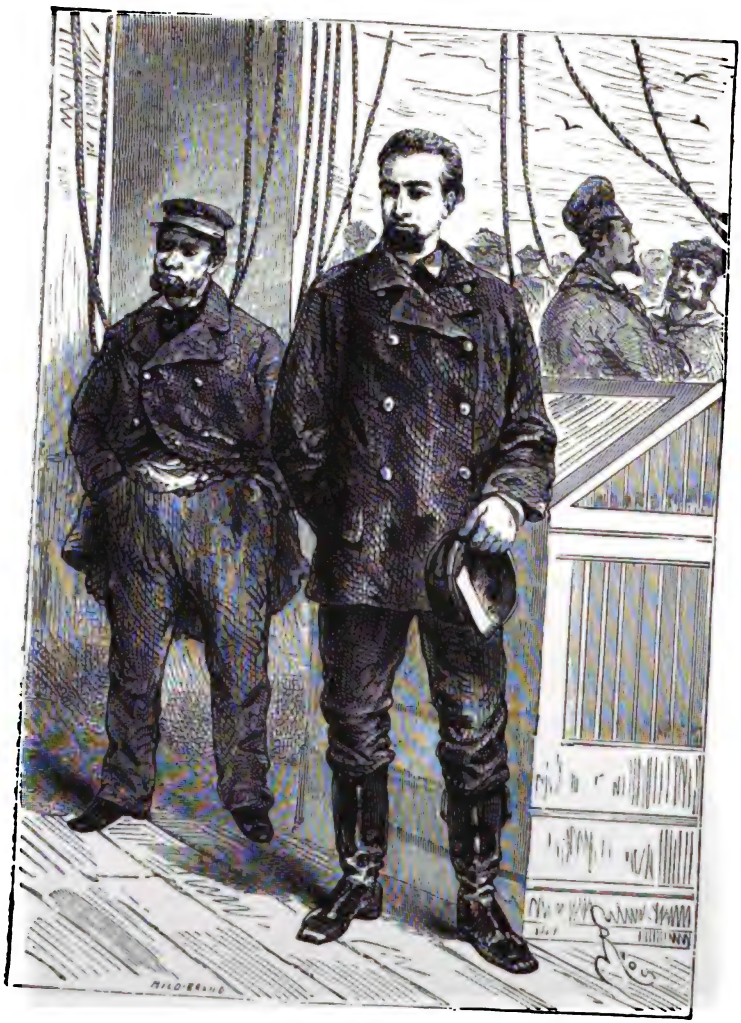

"THE MATE."

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lively imagination, and I am sometimes tempted to hope that in contemplating the wonders of nature he forgets his own infirmity."

"Yes, sir, of course he does," I assented.

"But," continued M. Letourneur, taking my hand, "although, perhaps, *he* may forget, *I* can never forget. Ah, sir, do you suppose that André can ever forgive his parents for bringing him into the world a cripple?"

The remorse of the unhappy father was very distressing, and I was about to say a few kind words of sympathy when André himself made his appearance. M. Letourneur hastened toward him and assisted him up the few steep steps that led to the poop.

As soon as André was comfortably seated on one of the benches, and his father had taken his place by his side, I joined them, and we fell into conversation upon ordinary topics, discussing the various points of the "Chancellor," the probable length of the passage, and the different details of our life on board. I find that M. Letourneur's estimate of Captain Huntly's character very much coincided with my own, and that, like me, he is impressed with the man's undecided manner and sluggish appearance. Like me, too, he has formed a very favourable opinion of Robert Curtis, the mate, a man of about thirty years of age, of great muscular power, with a frame and a will that seem ever ready for action.

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Whilst we were still talking of him, Curtis himself came on deck, and as I watched his movements I could not help being struck with his physical development; his erect and easy carriage, his fearless glance and slightly contracted brow all betokened a man of energy, thoroughly endowed with the calmness and courage that are indispensable to the true sailor. He seems a kind-hearted fellow, too, and is always ready to assist and amuse young Letourneur, who evidently enjoys his company. After he had scanned the weather and examined the trim of the sails, he joined our party and proceeded to give us some information about those of our fellow-passengers with whom at present we have made but slight acquaintance.

Mr. Kear, the American, who is accompanied by his wife, has made a large fortune in the petroleum springs in the United States. He is a man of about fifty, a most uninteresting companion, being overwhelmed with a sense of his own wealth and importance, and consequently supremely indifferent to all around him. His hands are always in his pockets, and the chink of money seems to follow him wherever he goes. Vain and conceited, a fool as well as an egotist, he struts about like a peacock showing its plumage, and to borrow the words of the physiognomist Gratiolet, "il se flaire, il se savoure, il se goûte." Why he should have taken his passage on board a mere merchant vessel instead of enjoying the luxuries of

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a Transatlantic steamer, I am altogether at a loss to explain.

The wife is an insignificant, insipid woman, of about forty years of age. She never reads, never talks, and I believe I am not wrong in saying, never thinks. She seems to look without seeing, and listen without hearing, and her sole occupation consists in giving her orders to her companion, Miss Herbey, a young English girl of about twenty.

Miss Herbey is extremely pretty. Her complexion is fair and her eyes deep blue, whilst her pleasing countenance is altogether free from that insignificance of feature which is not unfrequently alleged to be characteristic of English beauty. Her mouth would be charming if she ever smiled, but exposed as she is to the ridiculous whims and fancies of a capricious mistress, her lips rarely relax from their ordinary grave expression. Yet humiliating as her position must be, she never utters a word of open complaint, but quietly and gracefully performs her duties, accepting without a murmur the paltry salary which the bumptious petroleum-merchant condescends to allow her.

The Manchester engineer, William Falsten, looks like a thorough Englishman. He has the management of some extensive hydraulic works in South Carolina, and is now on his way to Europe to obtain some improved apparatus,

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and more especially to visit the mines worked by centrifugal force, belonging to the firm of Messrs. Cail. He is forty-five years of age, with all his interests so entirely absorbed by his machinery that he seems to have neither a thought nor a care beyond his mechanical calculations. Once let him engage you in conversation, and there is no chance of escape; you have no help for it but to listen as patiently as you can until he has completed the explanation of his designs.

The last of our fellow-passengers, Mr. Ruby, is the type of a vulgar tradesman. Without any originality or magnanimity in his composition, he has spent twenty years of his life in mere buying and selling, and as he has generally contrived to do business at a profit, he has realized a considerable fortune. What he is going to do with the money, he does not seem able to say: his ideas do not go beyond retail trade, his mind having been so long closed to all other impressions that it appears incapable of thought or reflection on any subject besides. Pascal says, "L'homme est visiblement fait pour penser. C'est toute sa dignité et tout son mérite;" but to Mr. Ruby the phrase seems altogether inapplicable.

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CHAPTER V.

October 7th.—This is the tenth day since we left Charleston, and I should think our progress has been very rapid. Robert Curtis, the mate, with whom I continue to have many a friendly chat, informed me that we could not be far off Cape Hatteras in the Bermudas; the ship's bearings, he said were lat. 32° 20′ N. and long. 64° 50′ W., so that he had every reason to believe that we should sight St. George's Island before night.

"The Bermudas!" I exclaimed. "But how is it we are off the Bermudas? I should have thought that a vessel sailing from Charleston to Liverpool, would have kept northwards, and have followed the track of the Gulf Stream."

"Yes, indeed, sir," replied Curtis, "that is the usual course; but you see that this time the captain hasn't chosen to take it."

"But why not?" I persisted.

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"That's not for me to say, sir; he ordered us eastwards, and eastwards we go."

"Haven't you called his attention to it?" I inquired.

Curtis acknowledged that he had already pointed out what an unusual route they were taking, but that the captain had said that he was quite aware what he was about. The mate made no further remark; but the knit of his brow, as he passed his hand mechanically across his forehead, made me fancy that he was inclined to speak out more strongly.

"All very well, Curtis," I said, "but I don't know what to think about trying new routes. Here we are at the 7th of October, and if we are to reach Europe before the bad weather sets in, I should suppose there is not a day to be lost."

"Right, sir, quite right; there is not a day to be lost."

Struck by his manner, I ventured to add, "Do you mind, Mr. Curtis, giving me your honest opinion of Captain Huntly?"

He hesitated a moment, and then replied shortly, "He is my captain, sir."

This evasive answer of course put an end to any further interrogation on my part, but it only set me thinking the more.

Curtis was not mistaken. At about three o'clock the look-out man sung out that there was land to windward,

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and descried what seemed as if it might be a line of smoke in the north-east horizon. At six, I went on deck with Mr. Letourneur and his son, and we could then distinctly make out the low group of the Bermudas, encircled by their formidable chain of breakers.

"There," said André Letourneur to me, as we stood gazing at the distant land," there lies the enchanted Archipelago, sung by your poet Moore. The exile Waller, too, as long ago as 1643, wrote an enthusiastic panegyric on the islands, and I have been told that at one time English ladies would wear no other bonnets than such as were made of the leaves of the Bermuda palm."

"Yes," I replied, "the Bermudas were all the rage in the seventeenth century, although latterly they have fallen into comparative oblivion,"

"But let me tell you, M. André," interposed Curtis, who had as usual joined our party, "that although poets may rave, and be as enthusiastic as they like about these islands, sailors will tell a different tale. The hidden reefs that lie in a semicircle about two or three leagues from shore make the attempt to land a very dangerous piece of business. And another thing, I know. Let the natives boast as they will about their splendid climate, they are visited by the most frightful hurricanes. They get the fag-end of the storms that rage over the Antilles; and the fag-end of a storm is like the tail of a whale; it's just the strongest bit

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of it. I don't think you'll find a sailor listening much to your poets,—your Moores, and your Wallers."

"No doubt you are right, Mr. Curtis," said André, smiling, "but poets are like proverbs; you can always find one to contradict another. Although Waller and Moore have chosen to sing the praises of the Bermudas, it has been supposed that Shakspeare was depicting them in the terrible scenes that are found in 'The Tempest.'"

The whole vicinity of these islands is beyond a question extremely perilous to mariners. Situated between the Antilles and Nova Scotia, the Bermudas have ever since their discovery belonged to the English, who have mainly used them for a military station. But this little archipelago, comprising some hundred and fifty different isles and islets, is destined to increase, and that, perhaps, on a larger scale than has yet been anticipated. Beneath the waves there are madrepores, in infinity of number, silently but ceaselessly pursuing their labours; and with time, that fundamental element in nature's workings, who shall tell whether these may not gradually build up island after island, which shall unite and form another continent?

I may mention that there was not another of our fellow-passengers who took the trouble to come on deck and give a glance at this strange cluster of islands. Miss Herbey,

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it is true, was making an attempt to join us, but she had barely reached the poop, when Mrs. Kear's languid voice was heard recalling her for some trifling service to her side.

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CHAPTER VI.

October 8th to October 13th.—The wind is blowing hard from the north-east, and the "Chancellor" under low-reefed top-sail and fore-sail, and labouring against a heavy sea, has been obliged to be brought ahull. The joists and girders all creak again until one's teeth are set on edge. I am the only passenger not remaining below; but I prefer being on deck notwithstanding the driving rain, fine as dust, which penetrates to my very skin. We have been driven along in this fashion for the best part of two days; the "stiffish breeze" has gradually freshened into "a gale;" the top-gallants have been lowered, and, as I write, the wind is blowing with a velocity of fifty or sixty miles an hour. Although the "Chancellor" has many good points, her drift is considerable, and we have been carried far to the south; we can only guess at our precise position, as the cloudy atmosphere entirely precludes us from taking the sun's altitude.

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All along, throughout this period, my fellow-passengers are totally ignorant of the extraordinary course that we are taking. England lies to the *north-east*, yet we are sailing directly *south-east*, and Robert Curtis owns that he is quite bewildered; he cannot comprehend why the captain, ever since this north-easterly gale has been blowing, should persist in allowing the ship to drive to the south, instead of tacking to the north-west until she gets into better quarters.

I was alone with Curtis to-day upon the poop, and could not help saying to him "Curtis, is your captain mad?"

"Perhaps, sir, I might be allowed to ask what *you* think upon that matter," was his cautious reply.

"Well, to say the truth," I answered, "I can hardly tell; but I confess there is every now and then a wandering in his eye, and an odd look on his face that I do not like. Have you ever sailed with him before?"

"No; this is our first voyage together. Again last night I spoke to him about the route we were taking, but he only said he knew all about it, and that it was all right."

"What do Lieutenant Walter and your boatswain think of it all?" I inquired.

"Think; why they think just the same as I do," replied the mate; "but if the captain chooses to take the ship to China we should obey his orders."

"But surely," I exclaimed, "there must be some limit to

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your obedience! Suppose the man is actually mad, what then?"

"If he should be mad enough, Mr. Kazallon, to bring the vessel into any real danger, I shall know what to do."

With this assurance I am forced to be content. Matters, however, have taken a different turn to what I bargained for when I took my passage on board the "Chancellor." The weather has become worse and worse. As I have already said, the ship under her large low-reefed top-sail and fore stay-sail has been brought ahull, that is to say, she copes directly with the wind, by presenting her broad bows to the sea; and so we go on still drift, drift, continually to the south.

How southerly our course has been is very apparent; for upon the night of the 11th we fairly entered upon that portion of the Atlantic which is known as the Sargassos Sea. An extensive tract of water is this, enclosed by the warm current of the Gulf Stream, and thickly covered with the wrack, called by the Spaniards "sargasso," the abundance of which so seriously impeded the progress of Columbus's vessels on his first voyage across the ocean.

Each morning at daybreak the Atlantic has presented an aspect so remarkable, that at my solicitation, M. Letourneur and his son have ventured upon deck to witness the unusual spectacle. The squally gusts make the metal shrouds vibrate like harp-strings; and unless we were on

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IN THE SEA OF SARGASSO.

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our guard to keep our clothes wrapped tightly to us, they would have been torn off our backs in shreds. The scene presented to our eyes is one of strangest interest. The sea, carpeted thickly with masses of prolific fucus, is a vast unbroken plain of vegetation, through which the vessel makes her way as a plough. Long strips of seaweed caught up by the wind become entangled in the rigging, and hang between the masts in festoons of verdure; whilst others, varying from two to three hundred feet in length, twine themselves up to the very mast-heads, from whence they float like streaming pendants. For many hours now, the "Chancellor" has been contending with this formidable accumulation of algæ; her masts are circled with hydrophytes; her rigging is wreathed everywhere with creepers, fantastic as the untrammelled tendrils of a vine, and as she works her arduous course, there are times when I can only compare her to an animated grove of verdure making its mysterious way over some illimitable prairie.

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CHAPTER VII.

October 14*th*.—At last we are free from the sea of vegetation, the boisterous gale has moderated into a steady breeze, the sun is shining brightly, the weather is warm and genial, and thus, two reefs in her top-sails, briskly and merrily sails the "Chancellor."

Under conditions so favourable, we have been able to take the ship's bearings: our latitude, we find, is 21° 33′ N., our longitude, 50° 17′ W.

Incomprehensible altogether is the conduct of Captain Huntly. Here we are, already more than ten degrees south of the point from which we started, and yet still we are persistently following a south-easterly course! I cannot bring myself to the conclusion that the man is mad. I have had various conversations with him: he has always spoken rationally and sensibly. He shows no tokens of insanity. Perhaps his case is one of those in which insanity is partial, and where the mania is of a character which

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extends only to the matters connected with his profession. Yet it is unaccountable.

I can get nothing out of Curtis; he listens coldly whenever I allude to the subject, and only repeats what he has said before, that nothing short of an overt act of madness on the part of the captain could induce him to supersede the captain's authority, and that the imminent peril of the ship could alone justify him in taking so decided a measure.

Last evening I went to my cabin about eight o'clock, and after an hour's reading by the light of my cabin-lamp, I retired to my berth and was soon asleep. Some hours later I was aroused by an unaccustomed noise on deck. There were heavy footsteps hurrying to and fro, and the voices of the men were loud and eager, as if the crew were agitated by some strange disturbance. My first impression was, that some tacking had been ordered which rendered it needful to fathom the yards; but the vessel continuing to lie to starboard convinced me that this was not the origin of the commotion. I was curious to know the truth, and made all haste I could to go on deck; but before I was ready, the noise had ceased. I heard Captain Huntly return to his cabin, and accordingly I retired again to my own berth. Whatever may have been the meaning of the manœuvre, I cannot tell; it did not seem to have resulted in any improvement in the ship's pace; still it must be owned there was not much wind to speed us along.

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At six o'clock this morning I mounted the poop and made as keen a scrutiny as I could of everything on board. Everything appeared as usual. The "Chancellor" was running on the larboard tack, and carried low-sails, top-sails, and gallant-sails. Well braced she was; and under a fresh, but not uneasy breeze, was making no less than eleven knots an hour.

Shortly afterwards M. Letourneur and André came on deck. The young man enjoyed the early morning air, laden with its briny fragrance, and I assisted him to mount the poop. In answer to my inquiry as to whether they had been disturbed by any bustle in the night, André replied that he did not wake at all, and had heard nothing.

"I am glad, my boy," said his father, that you have slept so soundly. I heard the noise of which Mr. Kazallon speaks. It must have been about three o'clock this morning, and it seemed to me as though they were shouting. I thought I heard them say, 'Here, quick, look to the hatches!' but as nobody was called up, I presumed that nothing serious was the matter."

As he spoke I cast my eye at the panel-slides, which fore and aft of the main-mast open into the hold. They seemed to be all close as usual, but I now observed for the first time that they were covered with heavy tarpauling. Wondering in my own mind what could be the reason for

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these extra precautions I did not say anything to M. Letourneur, but determined to wait until the mate should come on watch, when he would doubtless give me, I thought, an explanation of the mystery.

The sun rose gloriously, with every promise of a fine dry day. The waning moon was yet above the western horizon, for as it still wants three days to her last quarter she does not set until 10.57 a.m. On consulting my almanac, I find that there will be a new moon on the 24th, and that on that day, little as it may affect us here in mid ocean, the phenomenon of the high sygyzian tides will take place on the shores of every continent and island.

At the breakfast hour M. Letourneur and André went below for a cup of tea, and I remained on the poop alone. As I expected, Curtis appeared, that he might relieve Lieutenant Walter of the watch. I advanced to meet him, but before he even wished me good morning, I saw him cast a quick and searching glance upon the deck, and then, with a slightly contracted brow, proceed to examine the state of the weather and the trim of the sails.

"Where is Captain Huntly?" he said to Walter.

"I have seen nothing of him," answered the lieutenant; "is there anything fresh up?"

"Nothing whatever," was the curt reply.

They then conversed for a few moments in an undertone, and I could see that Walter by his gesture gave

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a negative answer to some question which the mate had asked him. "Send me the boatswain, Walter," said Curtis aloud as the lieutenant moved away.

The boatswain immediately appeared, and another conversation was carried on in whispers. The man repeatedly shook his head as he replied to Curtis's inquiries, and then, in obedience to orders, called the men who were on watch, and made them plentifully water the tarpauling that covered the great hatchway.

Curious to fathom the mystery I went up to Curtis and began to talk to him upon ordinary topics, hoping that he would himself introduce the subject that was uppermost in my mind; finding, however, that he did not allude to it, I asked him point blank.

"What was the matter in the night, Curtis?"

He looked at me steadily, but made no reply.

"What was it?" I repeated. "M. Letourneur and myself were both of us disturbed by a very unusual commotion overhead."

"Oh, a mere nothing," he said at length; "the man at the helm had made a false move, and we had to pipe hands to brace the ship a bit; but it was soon all put to rights. It was nothing, nothing at all."

I said no more; but I cannot resist the impression that Robert Curtis has not acted with me in his usual straightforward manner.

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CHAPTER VIII.

October 15th to October 18th.—The wind is still in the north-east. There is no change in the "Chancellor's" course, and to an unprejudiced eye all would appear to be going on as usual. But I have an uneasy consciousness that something is not quite right. Why should the hatchways be so hermetically closed as though a mutinous crew was imprisoned between decks? I cannot help thinking too that there is something in the sailors so constantly standing in groups and breaking off their talk so suddenly whenever we approach; and several times I have caught the word "hatches" which arrested M. Letourneur's attention on the night of the disturbance.

On the 15th, while I was walking on the forecastle, I overheard one of the sailors, a man named Owen say to his mates,—

"Now I just give you all warning that I am not going to wait until the last minute. Every one for himself, say I."

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"Why, what do you mean to do?" asked Jynxstrop, the cook.

"Pshaw!" said Owen, "do you suppose that longboats were only made for porpoises?"

Something at that moment occurred to interrupt the conversation, and I heard no more. It occurred to me whether there was not some conspiracy among the crew, of which probably Curtis had already detected the symptoms. I am quite aware that some sailors are most rebelliously disposed, and require to be ruled with a rod of iron.

Yesterday and to-day I have observed Curtis remonstrating somewhat vehemently with Captain Huntly, but there is no obvious result arising from their interviews; the Captain apparently being bent upon some purpose, of which it is only too manifest that the mate decidedly disapproves.

Captain Huntly is undoubtedly labouring under strong nervous excitement; and M. Letourneur has more than once remarked how silent he has become at meal-times; for although Curtis continually endeavours to start some subject of general interest, yet neither Mr. Falsten, Mr. Kear, nor Mr. Ruby are the men to take it up, and consequently the conversation flags hopelessly, and soon drops. The passengers too are now, with good cause, beginning to murmur at the length of the voyage, and Mr. Kear, who considers that the very elements ought to yield to his con-

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venience, lets the captain know by his consequential and haughty manner that he holds him responsible for the delay.

During the course of yesterday the mate gave repeated orders for the deck to be watered again and again, and although as a general rule this is a business which is done, once for all, in the early morning, the crew did not utter a word of complaint at the additional work thus imposed upon them. The tarpaulins on the hatches have thus been kept continually wet, so that their close and heavy texture is rendered quite impervious to the air. The "Chancellor's" pumps afford a copious supply of water, so that I should not suppose that even the daintiest and most luxurious craft belonging to an aristocratic yacht-club was ever subject to a more thorough scouring. I tried to reconcile myself to the belief that it was the high temperature of the tropical regions upon which we are entering, that rendered such extra sousings a necessity, and recalled to my recollection how, during the night of the 13th, I had found the atmosphere below deck so stifling, that in spite of the heavy swell I was obliged to open the porthole of my cabin, on the starboard side, to get a breath of air.

This morning at daybreak I went on deck. The sun had scarcely risen, and the air was fresh and cool, in strange contrast to the heat which below the poop had been quite oppressive. The sailors as usual were washing the deck.

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A great sheet of water, supplied continuously by the pumps, was rolling in tiny wavelets, and escaping now to starboard, now to larboard through the scupper-holes. After watching the men for a while as they ran about barefooted, I could not resist the desire to join them, so taking off my shoes and stockings, I proceeded to dabble in the flowing water.

Great was my amazement to find the deck perfectly hot to my feet! Curtis heard my exclamation of surprise, and before I could put my thoughts into words, said,—

"Yes! there is fire on board!"

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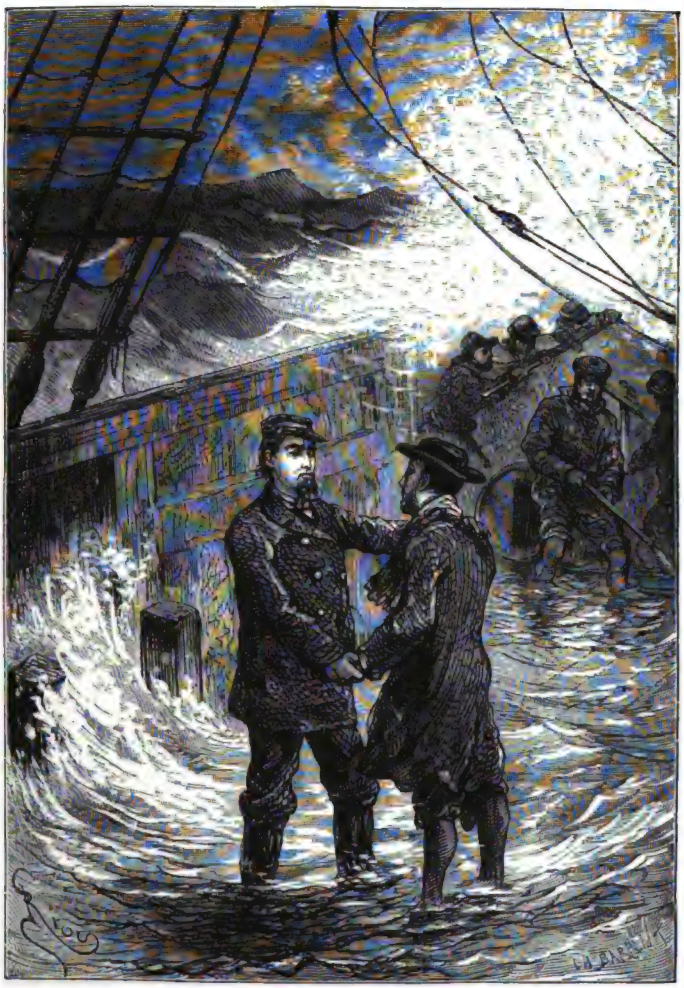

"YES! THERE IS FIRE ON BOARD."

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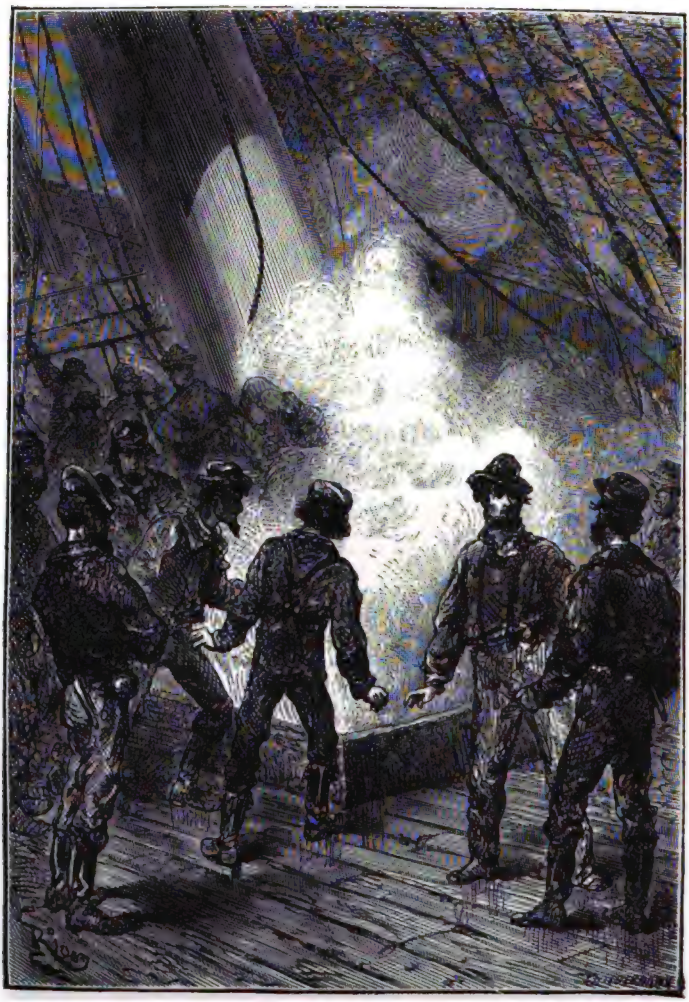

"THE MEN ON WATCH NOTICED A SLIGHT SMOKE ISSUING FROM THE LARGE HATCHWAY."

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CHAPTER IX.

October 19th.—Everything, then, is clear. The uneasiness of the crew, their frequent conferences, Owen's mysterious words, the constant scourings of the deck and the oppressive heat of the cabins which had been noticed even by my fellow-passengers, all are explained.

After his grave communication, Curtis remained silent. I shivered with a thrill of horror; a calamity the most terrible that can befall a voyager stared me in the face, and it was some seconds before I could recover sufficient composure to inquire when the fire was first discovered.

"Six days ago," replied the mate.

"Six days ago!" I exclaimed; "why, then, it was that night."

"Yes," he said, interrupting me; "it was the night you heard the disturbance upon deck. The men on watch noticed a slight smoke issuing from the large hatchway and immediately called Captain Huntly and myself. We

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found beyond all doubt, that the cargo was on fire, and what was worse, that there was no possibility of getting at the seat of the combustion. What could we do? Why; we took the only precaution that was practicable under the circumstances, and resolved most carefully to exclude every breath of air from penetrating into the hold. For some time I hoped that we had been successful. I thought that the fire was stifled; but during the last three days there is every reason to make us know that it has been gaining strength. Do what we will, the deck gets hotter and hotter, and unless it were kept constantly wet, it would be unbearable to the feet. But I am glad, Mr. Kazallon," he added; "that you have made the discovery. It is better that you should know it."

I listened in silence. I was now fully aroused to the gravity of the situation and thoroughly comprehended how we were in the very face of a calamity which it seemed that no human power could avert.

"Do you know what has caused the fire?" I presently inquired.

"It probably arose," he answered, "from the spontaneous combustion of the cotton. The case is rare, but it is far from unknown. Unless the cotton is perfectly dry when it is shipped, its confinement in a damp or ill-ventilated hold will sometimes cause it to ignite; and I have no doubt it is this that has brought about our misfortune."

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"But after all," I said, "the cause matters very little. Is there no remedy? Is there nothing to be done?"

Nothing, Mr. Kazallon," he said. "As I told you before, we have adopted the only possible measure within our power to check the fire. At one time I thought of knocking a hole in the ship's timbers just on her water-line, and letting in just as much water as the pumps could afterwards get rid of again; but we found the combustion was right in the middle of the cargo and that we should be obliged to flood the entire hold before we could get at the right place. That scheme consequently was no good. During the night, I had the deck bored in various places and water poured down through the holes; but that again seemed all of no use. There is only one thing that can be done; we must persevere in excluding most carefully every breath of outer air, so that perhaps the conflagration deprived of oxygen may smoulder itself out. That is our only hope."

"But, you say the fire is increasing?"

"Yes; and that shows that in spite of all our care there is some aperture which we have not been able to discover, by which, somehow or other, air gets into the hold."

"Have you ever heard of a vessel surviving such circumstances?" I asked.

"Yes, Mr. Kazallon," said Curtis; "it is not at all an

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unusual thing for ships laden with cotton to arrive at Liverpool or Havre with a portion of their cargo consumed; and I have myself known more than one captain run into port with his deck scorching his very feet, and who, to save his vessel and the remainder of his freight has been compelled to unload with the utmost expedition. But, in such cases, of course the fire has been more or less under control throughout the voyage; with us, it is increasing day by day, and I tell you I am convinced there is an aperture somewhere which has escaped our notice."

"But would it not be advisable for us to retrace our course, and make for the nearest land?"

"Perhaps it would," he answered. "Walter and I, and the boatswain, are going to talk the matter over seriously with the captain to-day. But, between ourselves, I have taken the responsibility upon myself; I have already changed the tack to the south-west; we are now straight before the wind, and consequently we are sailing towards the coast."

"I need hardly ask," I added; "whether any of the other passengers are at all aware of the imminent danger in which we are placed."

"None of them," he said; "not in the least; and I hope you will not enlighten them. We don't want terrified women and cowardly men to add to our embarrassment;

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the crew are under orders to keep a strict silence on the subject. Silence is indispensable."

I promised to keep the matter a profound secret, as I fully entered into Curtis's views as to the absolute necessity for concealment.

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CHAPTER X.

October 20th and 21st.—The "Chancellor" is now crowded with all the canvas she can carry, and at times her top-masts threaten to snap with the pressure. But Curtis is ever on the alert; he never leaves his post beside the man at the helm, and without compromising the safety of the vessel, he contrives by tacking to the breeze, to urge her on at her utmost speed.

All day long on the 20th, the passengers were assembled on the poop. Evidently they found the heat of the cabins painfully oppressive, and most of them lay stretched upon benches and quietly enjoyed the gentle rolling of the vessel. The increasing heat of the deck did not reveal itself to their well-shod feet and the constant scouring of the boards did not excite any suspicion in their torpid minds. M. Letourneur, it is true, did express his surprise that the crew of an ordinary merchant vessel should be distinguished by such extraordinary cleanliness, but as I

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replied to him in a very casual tone, he passed no further remark. I could not help regretting that I had given Curtis my pledge of silence, and longed intensely to communicate the melancholy secret to the energetic Frenchman; for at times when I reflect upon the eight-and-twenty victims who may probably, only too soon, be a prey to the relentless flames, my heart seems ready to burst.

The important consultation between captain, mate, lieutenant, and boatswain has taken place. Curtis has confided the result to me. He says that Huntly, the captain, is completely demoralized; he has lost all power and energy; and practically leaves the command of the ship to him. It is now certain the fire is beyond control, and that sooner or later it will burst out in full violence. The temperature of the crew's quarters has already become almost unbearable. One solitary hope remained; it is that we may reach the shore before the final catastrophe occurs. The Lesser Antilles are the nearest land; and although they are some five or six hundred miles away, if the wind remains north-east there is yet a chance of reaching them in time.

Carrying royals and studding-sails, the "Chancellor" during the last four-and-twenty hours has held a steady course. M. Letourneur is the only one of all the passengers who has remarked the change of tack; Curtis, however,

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has set all speculation on his part to rest by telling him that he wanted to get ahead of the wind, and that he was tacking to the west to catch a favourable current.

To-day, the 21st, all has gone on as usual; and as far as the observation of the passengers has reached, the ordinary routine has been undisturbed. Curtis indulges the hope even yet that by excluding the air, the fire may be stifled before it ignites the general cargo; he has hermetically closed every accessible aperture, and has even taken the precaution of plugging the orifices of the pumps, under the impression that their suction-tubes, running as they do to the bottom of the hold, may possibly be channels for conveying some molecules of air. Altogether, he considers it a good sign that the combustion has not betrayed itself by some external issue of smoke.

The day would have passed without any incident worth recording if I had not chanced to overhear a fragment of a conversation which demonstrated that our situation hitherto precarious enough, had now become most appalling.

As I was sitting on the poop, two of my fellow-passengers, Falsten, the engineer, and Ruby, the merchant, whom I had observed to be often in company, were engaged in conversation almost close to me. What they said was evidently not intended for my hearing, but my attention was directed towards them by some very emphatic gestures

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of dissatisfaction on the part of Falsten, and I could not forbear listening to what followed.

"Preposterous! shameful!" exclaimed Falsten; "nothing could be more imprudent."

"Pooh! pooh!" replied Ruby; "it's all right; it is not the first time I have done it."

"But don't you know that any shock at any time might cause an explosion?"

"Oh, it's all properly secured," said Ruby, "tight enough; I have no fears on that score, Mr. Falsten."

"But why," asked Falsten, "did you not inform the captain?"

"Just because if I had informed him, he would not have taken the case on board."

The wind dropped for a few seconds; and for a brief interval I could not catch what passed; but I could see that Falsten continued to remonstrate, whilst Ruby answered by shrugging his shoulders. At length I heard Falsten say,—

"Well, at any rate the captain must be informed of this, and the package shall be thrown overboard. I don't want to be blown up."

I started. To what could the engineer be alluding? Evidently he had not the remotest suspicion that the cargo was already on fire. In another moment the words "picrate of potash" brought me to my feet, and with an involuntary

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impulse I rushed up to Ruby, and seized him by the shoulder.

"Is there picrate of potash on board?" I almost shrieked.

"Yes," said Falsten, "a case containing thirty pounds."

"Where is it?" I cried.

"Down in the hold, with the cargo."

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CHAPTER XI.

WHAT my feelings were I cannot describe; but it was hardly in terror so much as with a kind of resignation that I made my way to Curtis on the forecastle, and made him aware that the alarming character of our situation was now complete, as there was enough explosive matter on board to blow up a mountain. Curtis received the information as coolly as it was delivered, and after I had made him acquainted with all the particulars said,—

"Not a word of this must be mentioned to any one else, Mr. Kazallon. Where is Ruby now?"

"On the poop," I said.

"Will you then come with me, sir?"

Ruby and Falsten were sitting just as I had left them. Curtis walked straight up to Ruby, and asked him whether what he had been told was true.

"Yes, quite true," said Ruby, complacently, thinking that the worst that could befall him would be that he might be convicted of a little smuggling.

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I observed that Curtis was obliged for a moment or two to clasp his hands tightly together behind his back to prevent himself from seizing the unfortunate passenger by the throat; but suppressing his indignation, he proceeded quietly, though sternly, to interrogate him about the facts of the case. Ruby only confirmed what I had already told him. With characteristic Anglo-Saxon incautiousness he had brought on board with the rest of his baggage, a case containing no less than thirty pounds of picrate, and had allowed the explosive matter to be stowed in the hold with as little compunction as a Frenchman would feel in smuggling a single bottle of wine. He had not informed the captain of the dangerous nature of the contents of the package, because he was perfectly aware that he would have been refused permission to bring the package on board.

"Any way," he said, with a shrug of his shoulders, "you can't hang me for it; and if the package gives you so much concern, you are quite at liberty to throw it into the sea. My luggage is insured."

I was beside myself with fury, and not being endowed with Curtis's reticence and self-control, before he could interfere to stop me, I cried out,—

"You fool! don't you know that there is fire on board?"

In an instant I regretted my words. Most earnestly I wished them unuttered. But it was too late: their effect

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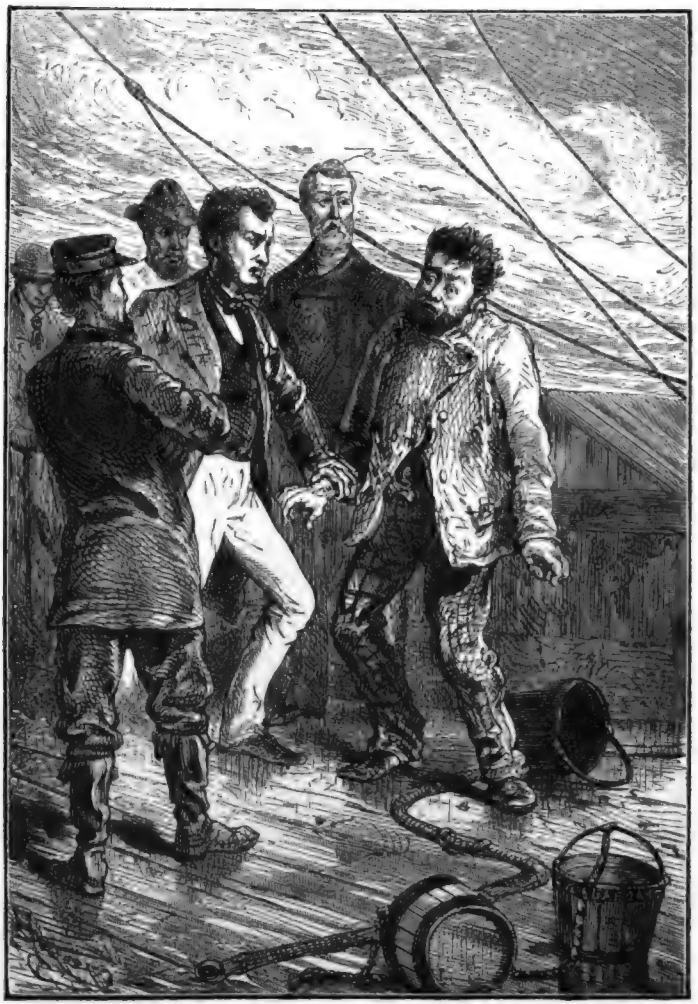

"PARALYZED WITH TERROR."

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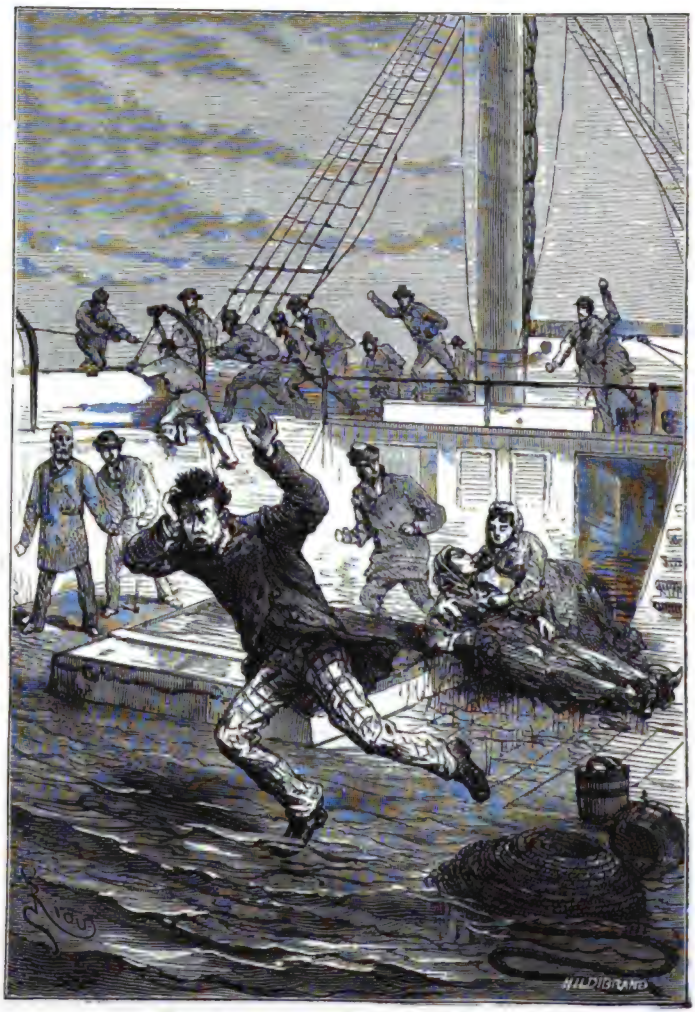

"FIRE ON BOARD! FIRE! FIRE!"

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upon Ruby was electrical. He was paralyzed with terror; his limbs stiffened convulsively; his eye was dilated; he gasped for breath, and was speechless. All of a sudden he threw up his arms and, as though he momentarily expected an explosion, he darted down from the poop, and paced franticly up and down the deck, gesticulating like a madman, and shouting,—

"Fire on board! Fire! Fire!"

On hearing the outcry, all the crew, supposing that the fire had now in reality broken out, rushed on deck; the rest of the passengers soon joined them, and the scene that ensued was one of the utmost confusion. Mrs. Kear fell down senseless on the deck, and her husband, occupied in looking after himself, left her to the tender mercies of Miss Herbey. Curtis endeavoured to silence Ruby's ravings, whilst I, in as few words as I could, made M. Letournour aware of the extent to which the cargo was on fire. The father's first thought was for André, but the young man preserved an admirable composure, and begged his father not to be alarmed, as the danger was not immediate. Meanwhile the sailors had loosened all the tacklings of the long-boat, and were preparing to launch it, when Curtis's voice was heard peremptorily bidding them to desist; he assured them that the fire had made no further progress; that Mr. Ruby had been unduly excited and not conscious of what he had said; and he pledged his word that when

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the right moment should arrive he would allow them all to leave the ship; but that moment, he said, had not yet come.

At the sound of a voice which they had learned to honour and respect, the crew paused in their operations, and the long-boat remained suspended in its place. Fortunately, even Ruby himself in the midst of his ravings, had not dropped a word about the picrate that had been deposited in the hold; for although the mate had a power over the sailors that Captain Huntly had never possessed, I feel certain that if the true state of the case had been known, nothing on earth would have prevented some of them, in their consternation, from effecting an escape. As it was, only Curtis, Falsten, and myself were cognizant of the terrible secret.

As soon as order was restored, the mate and I joined Falsten on the poop, where he had remained throughout the panic, and where we found him with folded arms, deep in thought, as it might be, solving some hard mechanical problem. He promised, at my request, that he would reveal nothing of the new danger to which we were exposed through Ruby's imprudence. Curtis himself took the responsibility of informing Captain Huntly of our critical situation.

In order to insure complete secrecy, it was necessary to secure the person of the unhappy Ruby, who, quite beside

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himself, continued to rave up and down the deck with the incessant cry of "Fire! fire!" Accordingly Curtis gave orders to some of his men to seize him and gag him; and before he could make any resistance the miserable man was captured and safely lodged in confinement in his own cabin.

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CHAPTER XII.

October 22nd.—Curtis has told the captain everything; for he persists in ostensibly recognizing him as his superior officer, and refuses to conceal from him our true situation. Captain Huntly received the communication in perfect silence, and merely passing his hand across his forehead as though to banish some distressing thought, re-entered his cabin without a word.

Curtis, Lieutenant Walter, Falsten, and myself have been discussing the chances of our safety, and I am surprised to find with how much composure we can all survey our anxious predicament.

"There is no doubt," said Curtis, "that we must abandon all hope of arresting the fire; the heat towards the bow has already become well-nigh unbearable, and the time must come when the flames will find a vent through the deck. If the sea is calm enough for us to make use of the boats, well and good; we shall of course get quit of the

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ship as quietly as we can; if, on the other hand, the weather should be adverse, or the wind be boisterous, we must stick to our place, and contend with the flames to the very last; perhaps, after all, we shall fare better with the fire as a declared enemy than as a hidden one."

Falsten and I agreed with what he said, but I pointed out to him that he had quite overlooked the fact of there being thirty pounds of combustible matter in the hold.

"No," he gravely replied, "I have not forgotten it, but it is a circumstance of which I do not trust myself to think. I dare not run the risk of admitting air into the hold by going down to search for the powder, and yet I know not at what moment it may explode. No; it is a matter that I cannot take at all into my reckoning, it must remain in higher hands than mine."

We bowed our heads in a silence which was solemn. In the present state of the weather, immediate flight was, we knew, impossible.

After a considerable pause, Falsten, as calmly as though he were delivering some philosophic dogma, observed,—

"The explosion, if I may use the formula of science, is not necessary, but contingent."

"But tell me, Mr. Falsten," I asked, "is it possible for picrate of potash to ignite without concussion?"

"Certainly it is," replied the engineer. "Under ordinary circumstances, picrate of potash although not *more*

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inflammable than common powder, yet possesses the *same* degree of inflammability."

We now prepared to go on deck. As we left the saloon, in which we had been sitting, Curtis seized my hand.

"Oh, Mr. Kazallon," he exclaimed, "if you only knew the bitterness of the agony I feel at seeing this fine vessel doomed to be devoured by flames, and at being so powerless to save her." Then quickly recovering himself, he continued, "But I am forgetting myself; you, if no other, must know what I am suffering. It is all over now," he said more cheerfully.

"Is our condition quite desperate?" I asked.

"It is just this," he answered deliberately, "we are over a mine, and already the match has been applied to the train. How long that train may be, 'tis not for me to say."

And with these words he left me.

The other passengers, in common with the crew, are still in entire ignorance of the extremity of peril to which we are exposed, although they are all aware that there is fire in the hold. As soon as the fact was announced, Mr. Kear, after communicating to Curtis his instructions that he thought he should have the fire immediately extinguished, and intimating that he held him responsible for all contingencies that might happen, retired to his cabin, where he has remained ever since, fully occupied in collecting and packing together the more cherished articles of his property

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and without the semblance of a care or a thought for his unfortunate wife, whose condition, in spite of her ludicrous complaints, was truly pitiable. Miss Herbey, however, is unrelaxing in her attentions, and the unremitted diligence with which she fulfils her offices of duty, commands my highest admiration.

October 23rd.—This morning, Captain Huntly sent for Curtis into his cabin, and the mate has since made me acquainted with what passed between them.

"Curtis," began the captain, his haggard eye betraying only too plainly some mental derangement, "I am a sailor, am I not?"

"Certainly, captain," was the prompt acquiescence of the mate.

"I do not know how it is," continued the captain, "but I seem bewildered; I cannot recollect anything. Are we not bound for Liverpool? Ah! yes! of course. And have we kept a north-easterly direction since we left?"

"No, sir, according to your orders we have been sailing south-east, and here we are in the tropics."

"And what is the name of the ship?"

"The 'Chancellor,' sir."

"Yes, yes, the 'Chancellor,' so it is. Well, Curtis, I really can't take her back to the north. I hate the sea, the very sight of it makes me ill, I would much rather not leave my cabin."

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Curtis went on to tell me how he had tried to persuade him that with a little time and care he would soon recover his indisposition, and feel himself again; but the captain had interrupted him by saying,—

"Well, well; we shall see by-and-by; but for the present you must take this for my positive order; you must, from this time, at once take the command of the ship, and act just as if I were not on board. Under present circumstances, I can do nothing. My brain is all on a whirl, you cannot tell what I am suffering;" and the unfortunate man pressed both his hands convulsively against his forehead.

"I weighed the matter carefully for a moment," added Curtis, "and seeing what his condition too truly was, I acquiesced in all that he required and withdrew, promising him that all his orders should be obeyed."

After hearing these particulars, I could not help remarking how fortunate it was that the captain had resigned of his own accord, for although he might not be actually insane, it was very evident that his brain was in a very morbid condition.

"I succeed him at a very critical moment," said Curtis thoughtfully; "but I shall endeavour to do my duty."

A short time afterwards he sent for the boatswain, and ordered him to assemble the crew at the foot of the main-

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mast. As soon as the men were together, he addressed them very calmly, but very firmly.

"My men," he said, "I have to tell you that Captain Huntly, on account of the dangerous situation in which circumstances have placed us, and for other reasons known to myself, has thought right to resign his command to me. From this time forward, I am captain of this vessel."

Thus quietly and simply the change was effected, and we have the satisfaction of knowing that the "Chancellor" is now under the command of a conscientious, energetic man, who will shirk nothing that he believes to be for our common good. M. Letourneur, André, Mr. Falsten, and myself immediately offered him our best wishes, in which Lieutenant Walter and the boatswain most cordially joined.

The ship still holds her course south-west, and Curtis crowds on all sail and makes as speedily as possible for the nearest of the Lesser Antilles.

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CHAPTER XIII.

October 24th to 29th.—For the last five days the sea has been very heavy, and although the "Chancellor" sails with wind and wave in her favour, yet her progress is considerably impeded. Here on board this veritable fire-ship I cannot help contemplating with a longing eye this vast ocean that surrounds us. The water supply should be all we need.

"Why not bore the deck?" I said to Curtis. "Why not admit the water by tons into the hold? What could be the harm? The fire would be quenched; and what would be easier than to pump the water out again?"

"I have already told you, Mr. Kazallon," said Curtis, "that the very moment we admit the air, the flames will rush forth to the very top of the masts. No; we must have courage and patience; we must wait. There is nothing whatever to be done, except to close every aperture."

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The fire continued to progress even more rapidly than we had hitherto suspected. The heat gradually drove the passengers nearly all on deck, and the two stern cabins, lighted, as I said, by their windows in the aft-board were the only quarters below that were inhabitable. Of these Mrs. Kear occupied one, and Curtis reserved the other for Ruby, who, a raving maniac, had to be kept rigidly under restraint. I went down occasionally to see him, but invariably found him in a state of abject terror, uttering horrible shrieks, as though possessed with the idea that he was being scorched by the most excruciating heat.

Once or twice, too, I looked in upon the ex-captain. He was always calm and spoke quite rationally upon any subject except his own profession; but in connexion with that he prated away the merest nonsense. He suffered greatly, but steadily declined all my offers of attention, and pertinaciously refused to leave his cabin.

To-day, an acrid, nauseating smoke made its way through the panellings that partition off the quarters of the crew. At once Curtis ordered the partition to be enveloped in wet tarpaulin, but the fumes penetrated even this, and filled the whole neighbourhood of the ship's bows with a reeking vapour that was positively stifling. As we listened, too, we could hear a dull rumbling sound, but we were as mystified as ever to comprehend where the air could have entered that was evidently fanning the

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flames. Only too certainly, it was now becoming a question not of days nor even of hours before we must be prepared for the final catastrophe. The sea was still running high, and escape by the boats was plainly impossible. Fortunately, as I have said, the main-mast and the mizen are of iron; otherwise the heat at their base would long ago have brought them down and our chances of safety would have been much imperilled; but by crowding on sail the "Chancellor" in the full north-east wind continued to make her way with undiminished speed.

It is now a fortnight since the fire was first discovered, and the proper working of the ship has gradually become a more and more difficult matter. Even with thick shoes any attempt to walk upon deck up to the forecastle was soon impracticable, and the poop, simply because its floor is elevated somewhat above the level of the hold, is now the only available standing-place. Water began to lose its effect upon the scorched and shrivelling planks; the resin oozed out from the knots in the wood, the seams burst open, and the tar, melted by the heat, followed the rollings of the vessel, and formed fantastic patterns about the deck.

Then to complete our perplexity, the wind shifted suddenly round to the north-west, whence it blew a perfect hurricane. To no purpose did Curtis do everything in his power to bring the ship ahull; every effort was vain; the "Chancellor" could not bear her trysail, so there was nothing to

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be done but to let her go with the wind, and drift further and further from the land for which we are longing so eagerly.

To-day, the 29th, the tempest seemed to reach its height; the waves appeared to us mountains high, and dashed the spray most violently across the deck. A boat could not live for a moment in such a sea.

Our situation is terrible. We all wait in silence, some few on the forecastle, the great proportion of us on the poop. As for the picrate, for the time we have quite forgotten its existence; indeed it might almost seem as though its explosion would come as a relief, for no catastrophe, however terrible, could far exceed the torture of our suspense.

While he had still the remaining chance, Curtis rescued from the store-room such few provisions as the heat of the compartment allowed him to obtain; and a lot of cases of salt meat and biscuits, a cask of brandy, some barrels of fresh water, together with some sails and wraps, a compass and other instruments are now lying packed in a mass all ready for prompt removal to the boats whenever we shall be obliged to leave the ship.

About eight o'clock in the evening, a noise is heard, distinct even above the raging of the hurricane. The panels of the deck are upheaved, and volumes of black smoke issue upwards as if from a safety-valve. An universal consternation seizes one and all: we must leave the volcano

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which is about to burst beneath our feet. The crew run to Curtis for orders. He hesitates; looks first at the huge and threatening waves; looks then at the boats. The long-boat is there, suspended right along the centre of the deck; but it is impossible to approach it now; the yawl, however, hoisted on the starboard side, and the whale-boat suspended aft, are still available. The sailors make frantically for the yawl.

"Stop, stop," shouts Curtis; "do you mean to cut off our last and only chance of safety? Would you launch a boat in such a sea as this?"

A few of them, with Owen at their head, give no heed to what he says. Rushing to the poop, and seizing a cutlass, Curtis shouts again,—

"Touch the tackling of the davit, one of you; only touch it, and I'll cleave your skull."

Awed by his determined manner, the men retire, some clambering into the shrouds, whilst others mount to the very top of the masts.

At eleven o'clock, several loud reports are heard, caused by the bursting asunder of the partitions of the hold. Clouds of smoke issue from the front, followed by a long tongue of lambent flame that seems to encircle the mizen-mast. The fire now reaches to the cabin occupied by Mrs. Kear, who, shrieking wildly, is brought on deck by Miss Herbey. A moment more, and Silas Huntly makes his

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"A LONG TONGUE OF LAMBENT FLAME THAT SEEMS TO ENCIRCLE THE MIZENMAST."

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"DOWN INTO THE FIERY FURNACE BELOW."

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appearance, his face all blackened with the grimy smoke; he bows to Curtis, as he passes, and then proceeds in the calmest manner to mount the aft-shrouds, and installs himself at the very top of the mizen.

The sight of Huntly recalls to my recollection the prisoner still below, and my first impulse is to rush to the staircase and do what I can to set him free. But the maniac has already eluded his confinement, and with singed hair and his clothes already alight, rushes upon deck. Like a salamander he passes across the burning deck with unscathed feet, and glides through the stifling smoke with unchoked breath. Not a sound escapes his lips.

Another loud report; the long-boat is shivered into fragments; the middle panel bursts the tarpaulin that covered it, and a stream of fire, free at length from the restraint that had held it, rises half-mast high.

"The picrate! the picrate!" shrieks the madman; "we shall all be blown up! the picrate will blow us all up."

And in an instant, before we can get near him, he has hurled himself, through the open hatchway, down into the fiery furnace below.

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CHAPTER XIV.

October 29th:—Night.—The scene, as night came on, was terrible indeed. Notwithstanding the desperateness of our situation, however, there was not one of us so paralyzed by fear, but that we fully realized the horror of it all.

Poor Ruby, indeed, is lost and gone, but his last words were productive of serious consequences. The sailors caught his cry of "Picrate, picrate!" and being thus for the first time made aware of the true nature of their peril, they resolved at every hazard to accomplish their escape. Beside themselves with terror, they either did not, or would not, see that no boat could brave the tremendous waves that were raging around, and accordingly they made a frantic rush towards the yawl. Curtis again made a vigorous endeavour to prevent them, but this time all in vain; Owen urged them on, and already the tackling was loosened, so that the boat was swung over to the ship's side, For a moment it hung suspended in mid-air, and then, with

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a final effort from the sailors, it was quickly lowered into the sea. But scarcely had it touched the water, when it was caught by an enormous wave which, recoiling with resistless violence, dashed it to atoms against the "Chancellor's" side.

The men stood aghast; they were dumbfoundered. Long-boat and yawl both gone, there was nothing now remaining to us but a small whale-boat, Not a word was spoken; not a sound was heard but the hoarse whistling of the wind, and the mournful roaring of the flames. From the centre of the ship, which was hollowed out like a furnace, there issued a column of sooty vapour that ascended to the sky. All the passengers, and several of the crew, took refuge in the aft-quarters of the poop. Mrs. Kear was lying senseless on one of the hen-coops, with Miss Herbey sitting passively at her side; M. Letourneur held his son tightly clasped to his bosom. I saw Falsten calmly consult his watch, and note down the time in his memorandum-book, but I was far from sharing his composure, for I was overcome by a nervous agitation that I could not suppress.

As far as we knew, Lieutenant Walter, the boatswain, and such of the crew as were not with us, were safe in the bow; but it was impossible to tell how they were faring, because the sheet of fire intervened like a curtain, and cut off all communication between stem and stern.

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I broke the dismal silence, saying "All over now, Curtis."

"No, sir, not yet," he replied, "now that the panel is open we will set to work, and pour water with all our might down into the furnace, and may be, we shall put it out, even yet."

"But how can you work your pumps while the deck is burning? and how can you get at your men beyond that sheet of flame?"

He made no answer to my impetuous questions, and finding that he had nothing more to say, I repeated that it was all over now.

After a pause, he said, "As long as a plank of the ship remains to stand on, Mr. Kazallon, I shall not give up my hope."

But the conflagration raged with redoubled fury, the sea around us was lighted with a crimson glow, and the clouds above shone with a lurid glare. Long jets of fire darted across the hatchways, and we were forced to take refuge on the taffrail at the extreme end of the poop. Mrs. Kear was laid in the whale-boat that hung from the stern, Miss Herbey persisting to the last in retaining her post by her side.

No pen could adequately portray the horrors of this fearful night. The "Chancellor" under bare poles, was driven, like a gigantic fire-ship with frightful velocity across the raging ocean; her very speed as it were, making

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"THIS FEARFUL NIGHT."

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common cause with the hurricane to fan the fire that was consuming her. Soon there could be no alternative between throwing ourselves into the sea, or perishing in the flames.

But where, all this time, was the picrate? perhaps, after all, Ruby had deceived us and there was no volcano, such as we dreaded, below our feet.

At half-past eleven, when the tempest seems at its very height, there is heard a peculiar roar distinguishable even above the crash of the elements. The sailors in an instant recognize its import.

"Breakers to starboard!" is the cry.

Curtis leaps on to the netting, casts a rapid glance at the snow-white billows, and turning to the helmsman shouts with all his might, "Starboard the helm!"

But it is too late. There is a sudden shock; the ship is caught up by an enormous wave; she rises upon her beam ends; several times she strikes the ground; the mizen-mast snaps short off level with the deck, falls into the sea, and the "Chancellor" is motionless.

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CHAPTER XV.

The night of the 29th continued.—It was not yet midnight; the darkness was most profound, and we could see nothing. But was it probable that we had stranded on the coast of America?

Very shortly after the ship had thus come to a standstill a clanking of chains was heard proceeding from her bows.

"That is well," said Curtis; "Walter and the boatswain have cast both the anchors. Let us hope they will hold."

Then, clinging to the netting, he clambered along the starboard side, on which the ship had heeled, as far as the flames would allow him. He clung to the holdfasts of the shrouds, and in spite of the heavy seas that dashed against the vessel he maintained his position for a considerable time, evidently listening to some sound that had caught his ear in the midst of the tempest. In about a quarter of an hour he returned to the poop.

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"Heaven be praised!" he said, "the water is coming in, and perhaps may get the better of the fire."

"True," said I, "but what then?"

"That," he replied, "is a question for by-and-by. We can now only think of the present."

Already I fancied that the violence of the flames was somewhat abated, and that the two opposing elements were in fierce contention. Some plank in the ship's side was evidently stove in, admitting free passage for the waves. But how, when the water had mastered the fire, should we be able to master the water? Our natural course would be to use the pumps, but these, in the very midst of the conflagration, were quite unavailable.

For three long hours, in anxious suspense, we watched and watched, and waited. Where we were we could not tell. One thing alone was certain: the tide was ebbing beneath us, and the waves were relaxing in their violence. Once let the fire be extinguished, and then, perhaps, there would be room to hope that the next high tide would set us afloat.

Towards half-past four in the morning the curtain of fire and smoke, which had shut off communication between the two extremities of the ship, became less dense, and we could faintly distinguish that party of the crew who had taken refuge in the forecastle; and before long, although it was impracticable to step upon the deck, the lieutenant

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and the boatswain contrived to clamber over the gunwale, along the rails, and joined Curtis on the poop.

Here they held a consultation, to which I was admitted. They were all of opinion that nothing could be done until daylight should give us something of an idea of our actual position. If we then found that we were near the shore, we would, weather permitting, endeavour to land, either in the boat or upon a raft. If, on the other hand, no land were in sight, and the "Chancellor" were ascertained to be stranded on some isolated reef, all we could do would be to get her afloat, and put her into condition for reaching the nearest coast. Curtis told us that it was long since he had been able to take any observation of altitude, but there was no doubt the north-west wind had driven us far to the south; and he thought, as he was ignorant of the existence of any reef in this part of the Atlantic, that it was just possible that we had been driven on to the coast of some portion of South America.

I reminded him that we were in momentary expectation of an explosion, and suggested that it would be advisable to abandon the ship and take refuge on the reef. But he would not hear of such a proceeding, said that the reef would probably be covered at high tide, and persisted in the original resolution, that no decided action could be taken before the daylight appeared.

I immediately reported this decision of the captain to

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my fellow-passengers. None of them seem to realize the new danger to which the "Chancellor" may be exposed by being cast upon an unknown reef, hundreds of miles it may be from land. All are for the time possessed with one idea, one hope; and that is, that the fire may now be quenched and the explosion averted.

And certainly their hopes seem in a fair way of being fulfilled. Already the raging flames that poured forth from the hatches have given place to dense black smoke, and although occasionally some fiery streaks dart across the dusky fumes, yet they are instantly extinguished. The waves are doing what pumps and buckets could never have effected; by their inundation they are steadily stifling the fire which was as steadily spreading to the whole bulk of the 1700 bales of cotton.

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CHAPTER XVI.

October 30th.—At the first gleam of daylight we eagerly scanned the southern and western horizons, but the morning mists limited our view. Land was nowhere to be seen. The tide was now almost at its lowest ebb, and the colour of the few peaks of rock that jutted up around us showed that the reef on which we had stranded was of basaltic formation. There were now only about six feet of water around the "Chancellor," though with a full freight she draws about fifteen. It was remarkable how far she had been carried on to the shelf of rock, but the number of times that she had touched the bottom before she finally ran aground left us no doubt that she had been lifted up and borne along on the top of an enormous wave. She now lies with her stern considerably higher than her bows, a position which renders walking upon the deck anything but an easy matter; moreover as the tide receded she heeled over so much to larboard that at one time Curtis

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"CARRIED OVERBOARD WITH THE MAST."

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feared she would altogether capsize; that fear, however, since the tide has reached its lowest mark, has happily proved groundless.

At six o'clock some violent blows were felt against the ship's side, and at the same time a voice was distinguished, shouting loudly, "Curtis! Curtis!" Following the direction of the cries we saw that the broken mizen-mast was being washed against the vessel, and in the dusky morning twilight we could make out the figure of a man clinging to the rigging. Curtis, at the peril of his life, hastened to bring the man on board. It proved to be none other than Silas Huntly, who, after being carried overboard with the mast, had thus, almost by a miracle, escaped a watery grave. Without a word of thanks to his deliverer, the ex-captain, passive, like an automaton, passed on and took his seat in the most secluded corner of the poop. The broken mizen may, perhaps, be of service to us at some future time, and with that idea it has been rescued from the waves and lashed securely to the stern.

By this time it was light enough to see for a distance of three miles round; but as yet nothing could be discerned to make us think that we were near a coast. The line of breakers ran for about a mile from south-west to north-east, and two hundred fathoms to the north of the ship an irregular mass of rocks formed a small islet. This islet rose about fifty feet above the sea, and was consequently

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above the level of the highest tides; whilst a sort of causeway, available at low water, would enable us to reach the island, if necessity required. But there the reef ended; beyond it the sea again resumed its sombre hue, betokening deep water. In all probability, then, this was a solitary shoal, unattached to a shore, and the gloom of a bitter disappointment began to weigh upon our spirits.

In another hour the mists had totally disappeared, and it was broad daylight. I and M. Letourneur stood watching Curtis as he continued eagerly to scan the western horizon. Astonishment was written on his countenance; to him it appeared perfectly incredible that, after our course for so long had been due south from the Bermudas, no land should be in sight. But not a speck, however minute, broke the clearly-defined line that joined sea and sky. After a time Curtis made his way along the netting to the shrouds, and swung himself quickly up to the top of the mainmast. For several minutes he remained there examining the open space around, then seizing one of the backstays he glided down and rejoined us on the poop.

"No land in sight," he said, in answer to our eager looks of inquiry.

At this point Mr. Kear interposed, and in a gruff, ill-tempered tone, asked Curtis where we were. Curtis replied that he did not know.

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"You don't know, sir? Then all I can say is that you ought to know!" exclaimed the petroleum merchant.

"That may be, sir; but at present I am as ignorant of our whereabouts as you are yourself," said Curtis.

"Well," said Mr. Kear, "just please to know that I don't want to stay for ever on your everlasting ship, so I beg you will make haste and start off again."

Curtis condescended to make no other reply than a shrug of the shoulders, and turning away he informed M. Letourneur and myself that if the sun came out he intended to take its altitude and find out to what part of the ocean we had been driven. His next care was to distribute preserved meat and biscuit amongst the passengers and crew already half fainting with hunger and fatigue, and then he set to work to devise measures for setting the ship afloat.

The conflagration was greatly abated; no flames now appeared, and although some black smoke still issued from the interior, yet its volume was far less than before. The first step was to discover how much water had entered the hold. The deck was still too hot to walk upon; but after two hours' irrigation the boards became sufficiently cool for the boatswain to proceed to take some soundings, and he shortly afterwards announced that there were five feet of water below. This the captain determined should not be pumped out at present, as he wanted it thoroughly to do its duty before he got rid of it.

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The next subject for consideration was whether it would be advisable to abandon the vessel, and to take refuge on the reef. Curtis thought not; and the lieutenant and the boatswain agreed with him. The chances of an explosion were greatly diminished, as it had been ascertained that the water had reached that part of the hold in which Ruby's luggage had been deposited; while, on the other hand, in the event of rough weather, our position even upon the most elevated points of rock might be very critical. It was accordingly resolved that both passengers and crew were safest on board.

Acting upon this decision we proceeded to make a kind of encampment on the poop, and the few mattresses that were rescued uninjured have been given up for the use of the two ladies. Such of the crew as had saved their hammocks have been told to place them under the forecastle where they would have to stow themselves as best they could, their ordinary quarters being absolutely uninhabitable.

Fortunately, although the store-room has been considerably exposed to the heat, its contents are not very seriously damaged, and all the barrels of water and the greater part of the provisions are quite intact. The stock of spare sails, which had been packed away in front, is also free from injury. The wind has dropped considerably since the early morning, and the swell in the sea is far less

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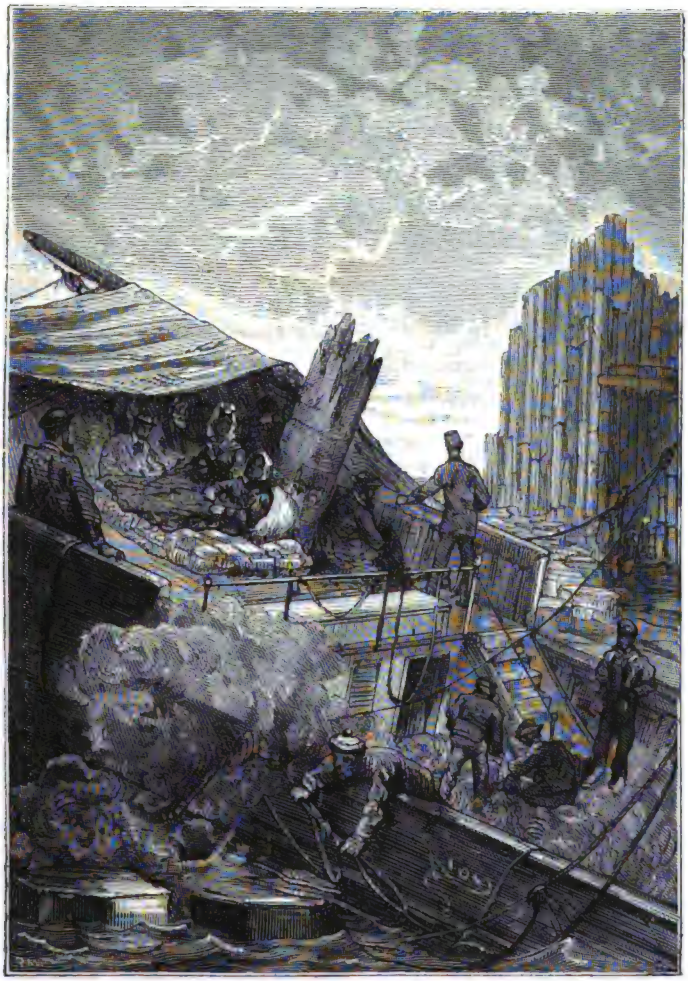

"WE PROCEEDED TO MAKE A KIND OF ENCAMPMENT ON THE POOP."

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heavy. On the whole our spirits are reviving, and we begin to think we may yet find a way out of our troubles.

M. Letourneur, his son, and I, have just had a long conversation about the ship's officers. We consider their conduct, under the late trying circumstances, to have been most exemplary, and their courage, energy, and endurance to have been beyond all praise. Lieutenant Walter, the boatswain, and Dowlas the carpenter have all alike distinguished themselves, and made us feel that they are men to be relied on. As for Curtis, words can scarcely be found to express our admiration of his character; he is the same as he has ever been, the very life of his crew, cheering them on by word or gesture; finding an expedient for every difficulty, and always foremost in every action.

The tide turned at seven this morning, and by eleven all the rocks were submerged, none of them being visible except the cluster of those which formed the rim of a small and almost circular basin from 250 to 300 feet in diameter, in the north angle of which the ship is lying. As the tide rose the white breakers disappeared, and the sea, fortunately for the "Chancellor," was pretty calm; otherwise the dashing of the waves against her sides, as she lies motionless, might have been attended by serious consequences.

As might be supposed, the height of the water in the hold increased with the tide from five feet to nine; but

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this was rather a matter for congratulation, inasmuch as it sufficed to inundate another layer of cotton.

At half-past eleven the sun, which had been behind the clouds since ten o'clock, broke forth brightly. The captain, who had already in the morning been able to calculate an horary angle, now prepared to take the meridian altitude, and succeeded at midday in making his observation most satisfactorily. After retiring for a short time to calculate the result, he returned to the poop and announced that we are in lat. 18° 5′ N. and long. 45° 53′ W., but that the reef on which we are aground is not marked upon the charts. The only explanation that can be given for the omission is that the islet must be of recent formation, and has been caused by some subterranean volcanic disturbance. But whatever may be the solution of the mystery, here we are 800 miles from land; for such, on consulting the map, we find to be the actual distance to the coast of Guiana, which is the nearest shore. Such is the position to which we have been brought, in the first place, by Huntly's senseless obstinacy, and, secondly, by the furious north-west gale.

Yet, after all, the captain's communication does not dishearten us. As I said before, our spirits are reviving. We have escaped the peril of fire; the fear of explosion is past and gone; and oblivious of the fact that the ship with a hold full of water is only too likely to founder when she

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puts out to sea, we feel a confidence in the future that forbids us to despond.

Meanwhile Curtis prepares to do all that common sense demands. He proposes, when the fire is quite extinguished, to throw overboard the whole, or the greater portion of the cargo, including, of course, the picrate; he will next plug up the leak, and then, with a lightened ship, he will take advantage of the first high tide to quit the reef as speedily as possible.

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CHAPTER XVII.

October 30th.—Once again I talked to M. Letourneur about our situation, and endeavoured to animate him with the hope that we should not be detained for long in our present predicament; but he could not be brought to take a very sanguine view of our prospects.

"But surely," I protested, "it will not be difficult to throw overboard a few hundred bales of cotton; two or three days at most will suffice for that."

"Likely enough," he replied, "when the business is once begun; but you must remember, Mr. Kazallon, that the very heart of the cargo is still smouldering, and that it will still be several days before any one will be able to venture into the hold. Then the leak, too, that has to be caulked; and, unless it is stopped up very effectually, we shall be only doomed most certainly to perish at sea. Don't, then, be deceiving yourself; it must be three weeks at least before you can expect to put out to sea. I can only hope meanwhile that the weather will continue

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propitious; it wouldn't take many storms to knock the 'Chancellor,' shattered as she is, completely into pieces."

Here, then, was the suggestion of a new danger to which we were to be exposed; the fire might be extinguished, the water might be got rid of by the pumps, but, after all, we must be at the mercy of the wind and waves; and, although the rocky island might afford a temporary refuge from the tempest, what was to become of passengers and crew if the vessel should be reduced to a total wreck? I made no remonstrance, however, to this view of our case, but merely asked M. Letourneur if he had confidence in Robert Curtis?

"Perfect confidence," he answered; "and I acknowledge it most gratefully, as a providential circumstance, that Captain Huntly had given him the command in time. Whatever man can do I know that Curtis will not leave undone to extricate us from our dilemma."

Prompted by this conversation with M. Letourneur I took the first opportunity of trying to ascertain from Curtis himself, how long he reckoned we should be obliged to remain upon the reef; but he merely replied, that it must depend upon circumstances, and that he hoped the weather would continue favourable. Fortunately the barometer is rising steadily, and there is every sign of a prolonged calm.

Meantime Curtis is taking active measures for totally

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extinguishing the fire. He is at no great pains to spare the cargo, and as the bales that lie just above the level of the water are still a-light he has resorted to the expedient of thoroughly saturating the upper layers of the cotton, in order that the combustion may be stifled between the moisture descending from above and that ascending from below. This scheme has brought the pumps once more into requisition. At present the crew are adequate to the task of working them, but I and some of our fellow-passengers are ready to offer our assistance whenever it shall be necessary.

With no immediate demand upon our labour, we are thrown upon our own resources for passing our time. M. Letourneur, André, and myself, have frequent conversations; I also devote an hour or two to my diary. Falsten holds little communication with any of us, but remains absorbed in his calculations, and amuses himself by tracing mechanical diagrams with ground-plan, section, elevation, all complete. It would be a happy inspiration if he could invent some mighty engine that could set us all afloat again. Mr. and Mrs. Kear, too, hold themselves aloof from their fellow-passengers, and we are not sorry to be relieved from the necessity of listening to their incessant grumbling; unfortunately, however, they carry off Miss Herbey with them, so that we enjoy little or nothing of the young lady's society. As for Silas Huntly, he has

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become a complete nonentity; he exists, it is true, but merely, it would seem, to vegetate.

Hobart, the steward, an obsequious, sly sort of fellow, goes through his routine of duties just as though the vessel were pursuing her ordinary course; and, as usual, is continually falling out with Jynxtrop, the cook, an impudent, ill-favoured negro, who interferes with the other sailors in a manner which, I think, ought not to be allowed.

Since it appears likely that we shall have abundance of time on our hands, I have proposed to M. Letourneur and his son that we shall together explore the reef on which we are stranded. It is not very probable that we shall be able to discover much about the origin of this strange accumulation of rock, yet the attempt will at least occupy us for some hours, and will relieve us from the monotony of our confinement on board. Besides, as the reef is not marked in any of the maps, I could not but believe that it would be rendering a service to hydrography if we were to take an accurate plan of the rocks, of which Curtis could afterwards verify the true position by a second observation made with a closer precision than the one he has already taken.

M. Letourneur agrees to my proposal, Curtis has promised to let us have the boat and some sounding-lines, and to allow one of the sailors to accompany us; so to-morrow morning, we hope to make our little voyage of investigation.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

October 31st to November 5th.—Our first proceeding on the morning of the 31st was to make the proposed tour of the reef, which is about a quarter of a mile long. With the aid of our sounding-lines we found that the water was deep, right up to the very rocks, and that no shelving shores prevented us coasting along them. There was not a shadow of doubt as to the rock being of purely volcanic origin, upheaved by some mighty subterranean convulsion. It is formed of blocks of basalt, arranged in perfect order, of which the regular prisms give the whole mass the effect of being one gigantic crystal; and the remarkable transparency of the sea enabled us plainly to observe the curious shafts of the prismatic columns that support the marvellous substructure.

"This is indeed a singular island," said M. Letourneur; "evidently it is of quite a recent origin."

"Yes, father," said André, "and I should think it has

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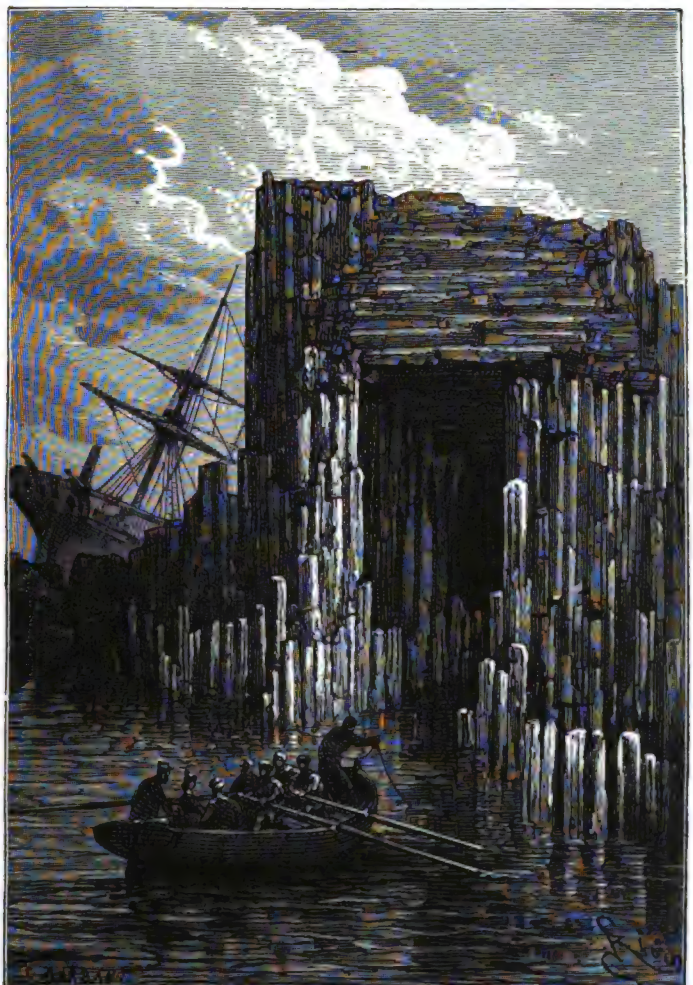

"IT IS FORMED OF BLOCKS OF BASALT ARRANGED IN PERFECT ORDER.'
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been caused by a phenomenon similar to those which produced the Julia Island, off the coast of Sicily, or the group of the Santorini, in the Grecian Archipelago. One could almost fancy that it had been created expressly for the 'Chancellor' to stand upon."

"It is very certain," I observed, "that some upheaving has lately taken place. This is by no means an unfrequented part of the Atlantic, so that it is not at all likely that it could have escaped the notice of sailors if it had been always in existence; yet it is not marked even in the most modern charts. We must try and explore it thoroughly and give future navigators the benefit of our observations."

But, perhaps, it will disappear as it came," said André. "You are no doubt aware, Mr. Kazallon, that these volcanic islands sometimes have a very transitory existence. Not impossibly, by the time it gets marked upon the maps it may no longer be here."

"Never mind, my boy," answered his father, "it is better to give warning of a danger that does not exist than overlook one that does. I daresay the sailors will not grumble much, if they don't find a reef where we have marked one."

"No, I daresay not, father," said André, "and after all this island is very likely as firm as a continent. However, if it is to disappear, I expect Captain Curtis would be glad to see it take its departure as soon as possible after he has

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finished his repairs; it would save him a world of trouble in getting his ship afloat."

"Why, what a fellow you are, André!" I said, laughing; "I believe you would like to rule Nature with a magic wand; first of all, you would call up a reef from the depth of the ocean to give the 'Chancellor' time to extinguish her flames, and then you would make it disappear just that the ship might be free again."

André smiled; then, in a more serious tone, he expressed his gratitude for the timely help that had been vouchsafed us in our hour of need.

The more we examined the rocks that formed the base of the little island, the more we became convinced that its formation was quite recent. Not a mollusc, not a tuft of seaweed was found clinging to the sides of the rocks; not a germ had the wind carried to its surface, not a bird had taken refuge amidst the crags upon its summits. To a lover of natural history, the spot did not yield a single point of interest; the geologist alone would find subject of study in the basaltic mass.

When we reached the southern point of the island I proposed that we should disembark. My companions readily assented, young Letourneur jocosely observing that if the little island was destined to vanish, it was quite right that it should first be visited by human beings. The boat was accordingly brought alongside, and we set foot upon

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"LET US CALL OUR ISLAND HAM ROCK."

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the reef, and began to ascend the gradual slope that leads to its highest elevation.

The walking was not very rough, and as André could get along tolerably well without the assistance of an arm, he led the way, his father and I following close behind. A quarter of an hour sufficed to bring us to the loftiest point in the islet, when we seated ourselves on the basaltic prism that crowned its summit.

André took a sketch-book from his pocket, and proceeded to make a drawing of the reef. Scarcely had he completed the outline when his father exclaimed,—

"Why, André, you have drawn a ham!"

"Something uncommonly like it, I confess," replied André. "I think we had better ask Captain Curtis to let us call our island Ham Rock."

"Good," said I; "though sailors will need to keep it at a respectful distance, for they will scarcely find that their teeth are strong enough to tackle with it."

M. Letourneur was quite correct; the outline of the reef as it stood clearly defined against the deep green water resembled nothing so much as a fine York ham, of which the little creek, where the "Chancellor" had been stranded, corresponded to the hollow place above the knuckle. The tide at this time was low, and the ship now lay heeled over very much to the starboard side, the few points of rock that emerged in the extreme south of the reef plainly

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marking the narrow passage through which she had been forced before she finally ran aground.

As soon as André had finished his sketch we descended by a slope as gradual as that by which we had come up, and made our way towards the west. We had not gone very far when a beautiful grotto, perfect as an architectural structure, arrested our attention. M. Letourneur and André who have visited the Hebrides, pronounced it to be a Fingal's cave in miniature; a Gothic chapel that might form a fit vestibule for the cathedral cave of Staffa. The basaltic rocks had cooled down into the same regular concentric prisms; there was the same dark canopied roof with its interstices filled up with its yellow lutings; the same precision of outline in the prismatic angles, sharp as though chiselled by a sculptor's hand; the same sonorous vibration of the air across the basaltic rocks, of which the Gaelic poets have feigned that the harps of the Fingal minstrelsy were made. But whereas at Staffa the floor of the cave is always covered with a sheet of water, here the grotto was beyond the reach of all but the highest waves, whilst the prismatic shafts themselves formed quite a solid pavement.

After remaining nearly an hour in our newly-discovered grotto we returned to the "Chancellor," and communicated the result of our explorations to Curtis, who entered the island upon his chart by the name that André Letourneur had proposed.

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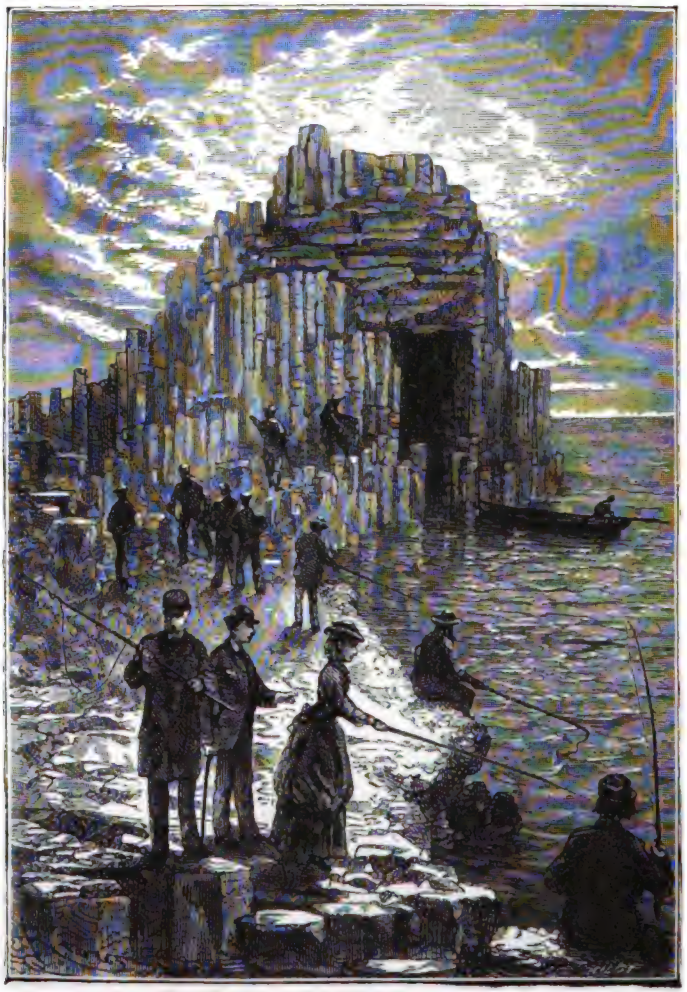

"SOMETIMES WE FISH ALONG THE SHORE."

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Since its discovery we have not permitted a day to pass without spending some time in our Ham Rock grotto. Curtis has taken an opportunity of visiting it, but he is too preoccupied with other matters to have much interest to spare for the wonders of nature. Falsten, too, came once and examined the character of the rocks, knocking and chipping them about with all the mercilessness of a geologist. Mr. Kear would not trouble himself to leave the ship; and although I asked his wife to join us in one of our excursions she declined, upon the plea that the fatigue, as well as the inconvenience of embarking in the boat, would be more than she could bear.

Miss Herbey, only too thankful to escape even for an hour from her capricious mistress, eagerly accepted M. Letourneur's invitation to pay a visit to the reef, but to her great disappointment Mrs. Kear at first refused point-blank to allow her to leave the ship. I felt intensely annoyed, and resolved to intercede in Miss Herbey's favour; and as I had already rendered that self-indulgent lady sundry services which she thought she might probably be glad again to accept, I gained my point, and Miss Herbey has several times been permitted to accompany us across the rocks, where the young girl's delight at her freedom has been a pleasure to behold.

Sometimes we fish along the shore, and then enjoy a luncheon in the grotto, whilst the basalt columns vibrate

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like harps to the breeze. This arid reef, little as it is, compared with the cramped limits of the "Chancellor's" deck is like some vast domain; soon there will be scarcely a stone with which we are not familiar, scarcely a portion of its surface which we have not merrily trodden, and I am sure that when the hour of departure arrives we shall leave it with regret.

In the course of conversation, André Letourneur one day happened to say that he believed the island of Staffa belonged to the Macdonald family, who let it for the small sum of £12 a year.

"I suppose then," said Miss Herbey, "that we should hardly get more than half-a-crown a year for our pet little island."

"I don't think you would get a penny for it, Miss Herbey; but are you thinking of taking a lease?" I said, laughing.

"Not at present," she said; then added, with a half-suppressed sigh, "and yet it is a place where I have seemed to know what it is to be really happy."

André murmured some expression of assent, and we all felt that there was something touching in the words of the orphaned, friendless girl who had found her long-lost sense of happiness on a lonely rock in the Atlantic.

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CHAPTER XIX.

November 6th to November 15th.—For the first five days after the "Chancellor" had run aground, there was a dense black smoke continually rising from the hold; but it gradually diminished until the 6th of November, when we might consider that the fire was extinguished. Curtis, nevertheless, deemed it prudent to persevere in working the pumps, which he did until the entire hull of the ship, right up to the deck, had been completely inundated.

The rapidity, however, with which the water, at every retreat of the tide, drained off to the level of the sea, was an indication that the leak must be of considerable magnitude; and such, on investigation, proved to be the case. One of the sailors, named Flaypole, dived one day at low water to examine the extent of the damage, and found that the hole was not much less than four feet square, and was situated thirty feet fore of the helm, and two feet above the rider of the keel; three planks had been stoved in by a

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sharp point of rock, and it was only a wonder that the violence with which the heavily-laden vessel had been thrown ashore did not result in the smashing in of many parts besides.

As it would be a couple of days or more before the hold would be in a condition for the bales of cotton to be removed for the carpenter to examine the damage from the interior of the ship, Curtis employed the interval in having the broken mizen-mast repaired. Dowlas the carpenter, with considerable skill, contrived to mortice it into its former stump, and made the junction thoroughly secure by strong iron-belts and bolts. The shrouds, the stays and backstays, were then carefully refitted, some of the sails were changed, and the whole of the running rigging was renewed. Injury, to some extent, had been done to the poop and to the crew's lockers in the front; but time and labour were all that were wanted to make them good; and with such a will did every one set to work that it was not long before all the cabins were again available for use.

On the 8th the unlading of the ship commenced. Pulleys and tackling were put over the hatches, and passengers and crew together proceeded to haul up the heavy bales which had been deluged so frequently by water that the cotton was all but spoiled. One by one the sodden bales were placed in the boat to be transported to the reef. After the first layer of cotton had been removed it became necessary

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to drain off part of the water that filled the hold. For this purpose the leak in the side had somehow or other to be stopped, and this was an operation which was cleverly accomplished by Dowlas and Flaypole, who contrived to dive at low tide and nail a sheet of copper over the entire hole. This, however, of itself would have been utterly inadequate to sustain the pressure that would arise from the action of the pumps; so Curtis ordered that a number of the bales should be piled up inside against the broken planks. The scheme succeeded very well, and as the water got lower and lower in the hold the men were enabled to resume their task of unlading.

Curtis thinks it quite probable that the leaks may be mended from the interior. By far the best way of repairing the damage would be to careen the ship, and to shift the planking, but the appliances are wanting for such an undertaking; moreover, any bad weather which might occur while the ship was on her flank would only too certainly be fatal to her altogether. But the captain has very little doubt that by some device or other he shall manage to patch up the hole in such a way as will insure our reaching land in safety.

After two days' toil the water was entirely reduced, and without further difficulty the unlading was completed. All of us, including even André Letourneur, have been taking our turn at the pumps, for the work is so extremely

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fatiguing that the crew require some occasional respite; arms and back soon become strained and weary with the incessant swing of the handles, and I can well understand the dislike which sailors always express to the labour.

One thing there is which is much in our favour; the ship lies on a firm and solid bottom, and we have the satisfaction of knowing that we are not contending with a flood that encroaches faster than it can be resisted. Heaven grant that we may not be called to make like efforts, and to make them hopelessly, for a foundering ship!

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CHAPTER XX.

November 15th to 20th.—The examination of the hold has at last been made. Amongst the first things that were found was the case of picrate, perfectly intact, having neither been injured by the water, nor of course reached by the flames. Why it was not at once pitched into the sea I cannot say; but it was merely conveyed to the extremity of the island, and there it remains.

While they were below, Curtis and Dowlas made themselves acquainted with the full extent of the mischief that had been done by the conflagration. They found that the deck and the cross-beams that supported it had been much less injured than they expected, and the thick, heavy planks had only been scorched very superficially. But the action of the fire on the flanks of the ship had been of a much more serious character; a long portion of the inside boarding had been burnt away, and the very ribs of the vessel were considerably damaged; the

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oakum caulkings had all started away from the butt-ends and seams; so much so that it was little short of a miracle that the whole ship had not long since gaped completely open.

The captain and the carpenter returned to the deck with anxious faces. Curtis lost no time in assembling passengers and crew, and announcing to them the facts of the case.

"My friends," he said, "I am here to tell you that the 'Chancellor' has sustained far greater injuries than we suspected, and that her hull is very seriously damaged. If we had been stranded anywhere else than on a barren reef, that may at any time be overwhelmed by a tempestuous sea I should not have hesitated to take the ship to pieces, and construct a smaller vessel that might have carried us safely to land; but I dare not run the risk of remaining here. We are now 800 miles from the coast of Paramaribo, the nearest portion of Dutch Guiana, and in ten or twelve days, if the weather should be favourable, I believe we could reach the shore. What I now propose to do is to stop the leak by the best means we can command, and make at once for the nearest port."

As no better plan seemed to suggest itself, Curtis's proposal was unanimously accepted. Dowlas and his assistants immediately set to work to repair the charred frame-work of the ribs, and to stop the leak; they took

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care thoroughly to caulk from the outside all the seams that were above low water mark ; lower than that they were unable to work, and had to content themselves with such repairs as they could effect in the interior. But after all the pains there is no doubt the " Chancellor " is not fit for a long voyage, and would be condemned as unseaworthy at any port at which we might put in.

To-day, the 20th, Curtis having done all that human power could do to repair his ship, determined to put her to sea.

Ever since the " Chancellor " had been relieved of her cargo, and of the water in her hold, she had been able to float in the little natural basin into which she had been driven. The basin was enclosed on either hand by rocks that remained uncovered even at high water, but was sufficiently wide to allow the vessel to turn quite round at its broadest part, and by means of hawsers fastened on the reef to be brought with her bows towards the south ; while, to prevent her being carried back on to the reef, she has been anchored fore and aft.

To all appearance, then, it seemed as though it would be an easy matter to put the " Chancellor " to sea ; if the wind were favourable the sails would be hoisted, if otherwise, she would have to be towed through the narrow passage. All seemed simple. But unlooked-for difficulties had yet to be surmounted.

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The mouth of the passage is guarded by a kind of ridge of basalt, which at high tide we knew was barely covered with sufficient water to float the "Chancellor," even when entirely unfreighted. To be sure she had been carried over the obstacle once before, but then, as I have already said, she had been caught up by an enormous wave, and might have been said to be *lifted* over the barrier into her present position. Besides, on that ever-memorable night, there had not only been the ordinary spring-tide, but an equinoctial tide, such a one as could not be expected to occur again for many months. Waiting was out of the question; so Curtis determined to run the risk, and to take advantage of the spring-tide, which would occur to-day, to make an attempt to get the ship, lightened as she was, over the bar; after which, he might ballast her sufficiently to sail.

The wind was blowing from the north-west, and consequently right in the direction of the passage. The captain, however, after a consultation, preferred to tow the ship over the ridge, as he considered it was scarcely safe to allow a vessel of doubtful stability at full sail to charge an obstacle that would probably bring her to a dead lock. Before the operation was commenced, Curtis took the precaution of having an anchor ready in the stern, for, in the event of the attempt being unsuccessful, it would be necessary to bring the ship back to her present moorings

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Two more anchors were next carried outside the passage, which was not more than two hundred feet in length. The chains were attached to the windlass, the sailors worked away at the handspikes, and at four o'clock in the afternoon the "Chancellor" was in motion.

High tide would be at twenty minutes past four, and at ten minutes before that time the ship had been hauled as far as her sea-range would allow; her keel grazed the ridge, and her progress was arrested. When the lowest part of her stern, however, just cleared the obstruction, Curtis deemed that there was no longer any reason why the mechanical action of the wind should not be brought to bear and contribute its assistance. Without delay, all sails were unfurled and trimmed to the wind. The tide was exactly at its height, passengers and crew together were at the windlass, M. Letourneur, André, Falsten, and myself being at the starboard bar. Curtis stood upon the poop, giving his chief attention to the sails; the lieutenant was on the forecastle; the boatswain by the helm. The sea seemed propitiously calm and, as it swelled gently to and fro, lifted the ship several times.

"Now, my boys," said Curtis, in his calm clear voice, "all together! Off!"

Round went the windlass; click, click, clanked the chains as link by link they were forced through the hawse-holes.

The breeze freshened, and the masts gave to the pressure

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of the sails, but round and round we went, keeping time in regular monotony to the sing-song tune hummed by one of the sailors.

We had gained about twenty feet, and were redoubling our efforts when the ship grounded again.

And now no effort would avail; all was in vain; the tide began to turn; and the "Chancellor" would not advance an inch. Was there time to go back? She would inevitably go to pieces if left balanced upon the ridge. In an instant the captain has ordered the sails to be furled, and the anchor dropped from the stern.

One moment of terrible anxiety, and all is well.

The "Chancellor" tacks to stern, and glides back into the basin, which is once more her prison.

"Well, captain," says the boatswain, "what's to be done now?"

"I don't know," said Curtis, "but we shall get across somehow."

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CHAPTER XXI.

November 21st to 24th.—There was assuredly no time to be lost before we ought to leave Ham Rock reef. The barometer had been falling ever since the morning, the sea was getting rougher, and there was every symptom that the weather, hitherto so favourable, was on the point of breaking; and in the event of a gale the "Chancellor" must inevitably be dashed to pieces on the rocks.

In the evening, when the tide was quite low, and the rocks uncovered, Curtis, the boatswain, and Dowlas went to examine the ridge which had proved so serious an obstruction. Falsten and I accompanied them. We came to the conclusion that the only way of effecting a passage was by cutting away the rocks with pikes over a surface measuring ten feet by six. An extra depth of nine or ten inches would give a sufficient gauge, and the channel might be accurately marked out by buoys; in this way it was conjectured the ship might be got over the ridge and so reach the deep water beyond.

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"But this basalt is as hard as granite," said the boatswain; "besides, we can only get at it at low water, and consequently could only work at it for two hours out of the twenty-four."

"All the more reason why we should begin at once, boatswain," said Curtis.

"But if it is to take us a month, captain, perhaps by that time the ship may be knocked to atoms. Couldn't we manage to blow up the rock? we have got some powder on board."

"Not enough for that," said the boatswain.

"You have something better than powder," said Falsten.

"What's that?" asked the captain.

"Picrate of potash," was the reply.

And so the explosive substance with which poor Ruby had so grievously imperilled the vessel was now to serve her in good stead, and I now saw what a lucky thing it was that the case had been deposited safely on the reef, instead of being thrown into the sea.

Picric acid is a crystalline bitter product extracted from coal-tar, and forming, in combination with potash, a yellow salt known as picrate of potash. The explosive power of this substance is inferior to that of gun-cotton or of dynamite, but far greater than that of ordinary gunpowder; one grain of picric powder producing an effect equal to that of thirteen grains of common powder. Picrate is easily ignited by any sharp or violent shock, and some gun-priming

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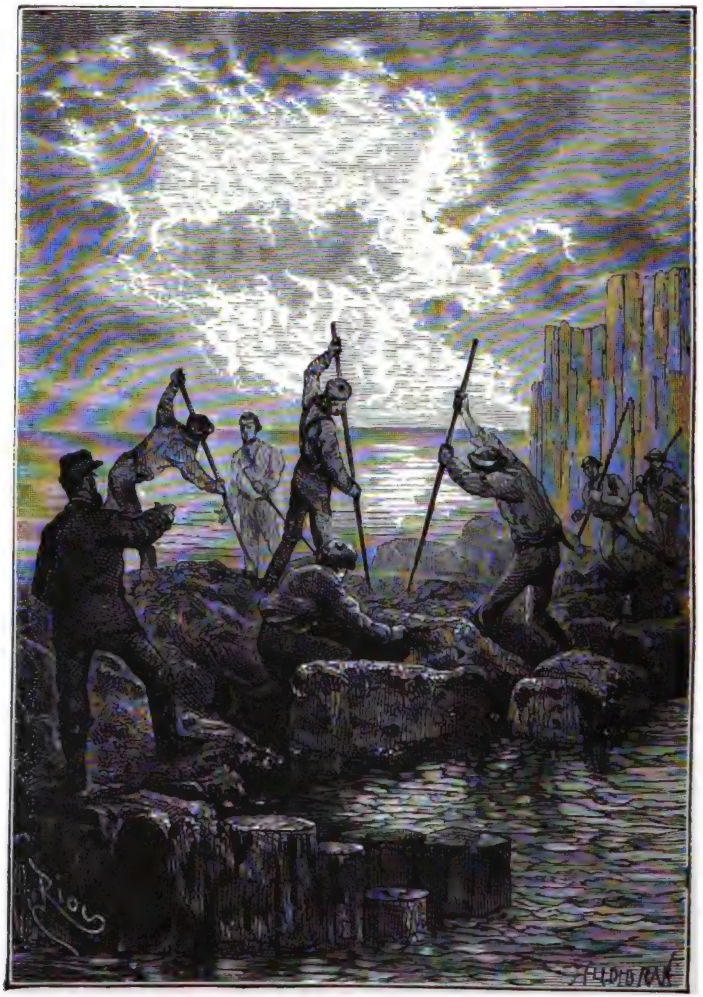

"THE SAILORS PROCEEDED TO HOLLOW OUT A MINE WHEREIN TO DEPOSIT THE POWDER."

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which we had in our possession would answer the purpose of setting it alight.

The sailors went off at once for their pikes, and Dowlas and his assistants, under the direction of Falsten, who, as an engineer, understood such matters, proceeded to hollow out a mine wherein to deposit the powder. At first we hoped that everything would be ready for the blasting to take place on the following morning, but when daylight appeared we found that the men, although they had laboured with a will, had only been able to work for an hour at low water and that four tides must ebb before the mine had been sunk to the required depth.

Not until eight o'clock on the morning of the 23rd was the work complete. The hole was bored obliquely in the rock, and was large enough to contain about ten pounds of explosive matter. Just as the picrate was being introduced into the aperture, Falsten interposed :—

"Stop," he said, "I think it will be best to mix the picrate with common powder, as that will allow us to fire the mine with a match instead of the gun-priming which would be necessary to produce a shock. Besides, it is an understood thing that the addition of gunpowder renders picrate far more effective in blasting such rocks as this, as then the violence of the picrate prepares the way for the powder which, slower in its action, will complete the disseverment of the basalt."

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Falsten is not a great talker, but what he does say is always very much to the point. His good advice was immediately followed; the two substances were mixed together, and after a match had been introduced the compound was rammed closely into the hole.

Notwithstanding that the "Chancellor" was at a distance from the rocks that insured her from any danger of being injured by the explosion, it was thought advisable that the passengers and crew should take refuge in the grotto at the extremity of the reef, and even Mr. Kear, in spite of his many objections, was forced to leave the ship. Falsten, as soon as he had set fire to the match, joined us in our retreat.

The train was to burn for ten minutes, and at the end of that time the explosion took place; the report, on account of the depth of the mine, being muffled, and much less noisy than we had expected. But the operation had been perfectly successful. Before we reached the ridge we could see that the basalt had been literally reduced to powder, and that a little channel, already being filled by the rising tide, had been cut right through the obstacle. A loud hurrah rang through the air; our prison-doors were opened, and we were prisoners no more!

At high tide the "Chancellor" weighed anchor and floated out into the open sea, but she was not in a condition to sail until she had been ballasted; and for the next

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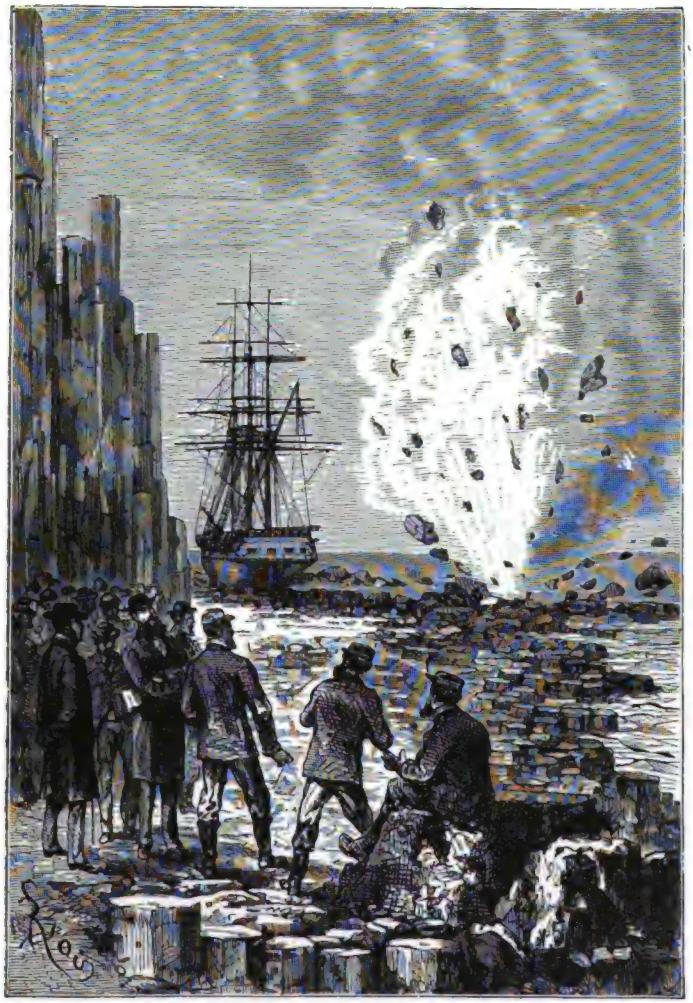

"OUR PRISON-DOORS WERE OPENED, AND WE WERE PRISONERS NO MORE!"

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twenty-four hours the crew were busily employed in taking up blocks of stone, and such of the bales of cotton as had sustained the least amount of injury.

In the course of the day, M. Letourneur, André, Miss Herbey, and I took a farewell walk round the reef, and André, with artistic skill, carved on the wall of the grotto the word "Chancellor,"—the designation Ham Rock, which we had given to the reef,—and the date of our running aground. Then we bade adieu to the scene of our three week's sojourn, where we had passed days that to some at least of our party will be reckoned as far from being the least happy of their lives.

At high tide this morning, the 24th, with low, top, and gallant sails all set, the "Chancellor" started on her onward way, and two hours later the last peak of Ham Rock had vanished below the horizon.

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CHAPTER XXII.

November 24th to December 1st.—Here we were then once more at sea, and although on board a ship of which the stability was very questionable, we had hopes, if the wind continued favourable, of reaching the coast of Guiana in the course of a few days.

Our way was south-west and consequently with the wind, and although Curtis would not crowd on all sail lest the extra speed should have a tendency to spring the leak afresh, the "Chancellor" made a progress that was quite satisfactory. Life on board began to fall back into its former routine; the feeling of insecurity and the consciousness that we were merely retracing our path doing much, however, to destroy the animated intercourse that would otherwise go on between passenger and passenger.

The first few days passed without any incident worth recording, then on the 29th, the wind shifted to the north, and it became necessary to brace the yards, trim the sails,

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and take a starboard tack. This made the ship lurch very much on one side, and as Curtis felt that she was labouring far too heavily, he clued up the top-gallants, prudently reckoning that, under the circumstances, caution was far more important than speed.

The night came on dark and foggy. The breeze freshened considerably, and, unfortunately for us, hailed from the north-west. Although we carried no top-sails at all, the ship seemed to heel over more than ever. Most of the passengers had retired to their cabins, but all the crew remained on deck, whilst Curtis never quitted his post upon the poop.

Towards two o'clock in the morning I was myself preparing to go to my cabin, when Burke, one of the sailors who had been down into the hold, came on deck with the ominous cry,—

"Two feet of water below."

In an instant Curtis and the boatswain had descended the ladder. The startling news was only too true; the sea-water was entering the hold, but whether the leak had sprung afresh, or whether the caulking in some of the seams was insufficient, it was then impossible to determine; all that could be done was to let the ship go with the wind and wait for day.

At daybreak they sounded again:—"Three feet of water!" was the report. I glanced at Curtis, his lips were white,

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but he had not lost his self-possession. He quietly informed such of the passengers as were already on deck of the new danger that threatened us; it was better that they should know the worst, and the fact could not be long concealed. I told M. Letourneur that I could not help hoping that there might yet be time to reach the land before the last crisis came. Falsten was about to give vent to an expression of despair, but he was soon silenced by Miss Herbey asserting her confidence that all would yet be well.

Curtis at once divided the crew into two sets, and made them work incessantly, turn and turn about, at the pumps. The men applied themselves to their task with resignation rather than with ardour; the labour was hard and scarcely repaid them; the pumps were constantly getting out of order, the valves being choked up by the ashes and bits of cotton that were floating about in the hold, while every moment that was spent in cleaning or repairing them was so much time lost.

Slowly, but surely, the water continued to rise, and on the following morning the soundings gave five feet for its depth. I noticed that Curtis's brow contracted each time that the boatswain or the lieutenant brought him their report. There was no doubt it was only a question of time, and not for an instant must the efforts for keeping down the level be relaxed. Already the ship had sunk a foot lower in the water, and as her weight increased she no

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longer rose buoyantly with the waves, but pitched and rolled considerably.

All yesterday, and last night, the pumping continued; but still the sea gained upon us. The crew are weary and discouraged, but the second officer and the boatswain set them a fine example of endurance, and the passengers have now begun to take their turn at the pumps.

But all are conscious of toiling almost against hope; we are no longer secured firmly to the solid soil of the Ham Rock reef, but we are floating over an abyss which daily, nay hourly, threatens to swallow us into its depths.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

December 2nd and 3rd.—For four hours we have succeeded in keeping the water in the hold to one level; now, however, it is very evident that the time cannot be far distant when the pumps will be quite unequal to their task.

Yesterday Curtis, who does not allow himself a minute's rest, made a personal inspection of the hold. I, with the boatswain and carpenter, accompanied him. After dislodging some of the bales of cotton we could hear a splashing, or rather gurgling sound; but whether the water was entering at the original aperture, or whether it found its way in through a general dislocation of the seams, we were unable to discover. But whichever might be the case, Curtis determined to try a plan which, by cutting off communication between the interior and exterior of the vessel, might, if only for a few hours, render her hull more watertight. For this purpose he had some strong, well-tarred sails drawn upwards by ropes from below the keel, as high

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as the previous leaking-place, and then fastened closely and securely to the side of the hull. The scheme was dubious, and the operation difficult, but for a time it was effectual, and at the close of the day the level of the water had actually been reduced by several inches. The diminution was small enough, but the consciousness that more water was escaping through the scupper-holes than was finding its way into the hold gave us fresh courage to persevere with our work.

The night was dark, but the captain carried all the sail he could, eager to take every possible advantage of the wind, which was freshening considerably. If he could have sighted a ship he would have made signals of distress, and would not have hesitated to transfer the passengers, and even have allowed the crew to follow, if they were ready to forsake him; for himself his mind was made up, he should remain on board the "Chancellor" until she foundered beneath his feet. No sail, however, hove in sight; consequently escape by such means was out of our power.

During the night the canvas covering yielded to the pressure of the waves, and this morning, after taking the sounding, the boatswain could not suppress an oath when he announced "Six feet of water in the hold!"

The ship, then, was filling once again, and already had sunk considerably below her previous water-line. With aching arms and bleeding hands we worked harder than

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ever at the pumps, and Curtis makes those who are not pumping form a line and pass buckets, with all the speed they can, from hand to hand.

But all in vain! At half-past eight more water is reported in the hold, and some of the sailors, overcome by despair, refuse to work one minute longer.

The first to abandon his post was Owen, a man whom I have mentioned before, as exhibiting something of a mutinous spirit. He is about forty years of age, and altogether unprepossessing in appearance; his face is bare, with the exception of a reddish beard, which terminates in a point; his forehead is furrowed with sinister-looking wrinkles, his lips curl inwards, and his ears protrude, whilst his bleared and bloodshot eyes are encircled with thick red rings.

Amongst the five or six other men who had struck work, I noticed Jynxtrop the cook, who evidently shared all Owen's ill feelings.

Twice did Curtis order the men back to the pumps, and twice did Owen, acting as spokesman for the rest, refuse; and when Curtis made a step forward as though to approach him, he said savagely,—

"I advise you not to touch me," and walked away to the forecastle.

Curtis descended to his cabin, and almost immediately returned with a loaded revolver in his hand.

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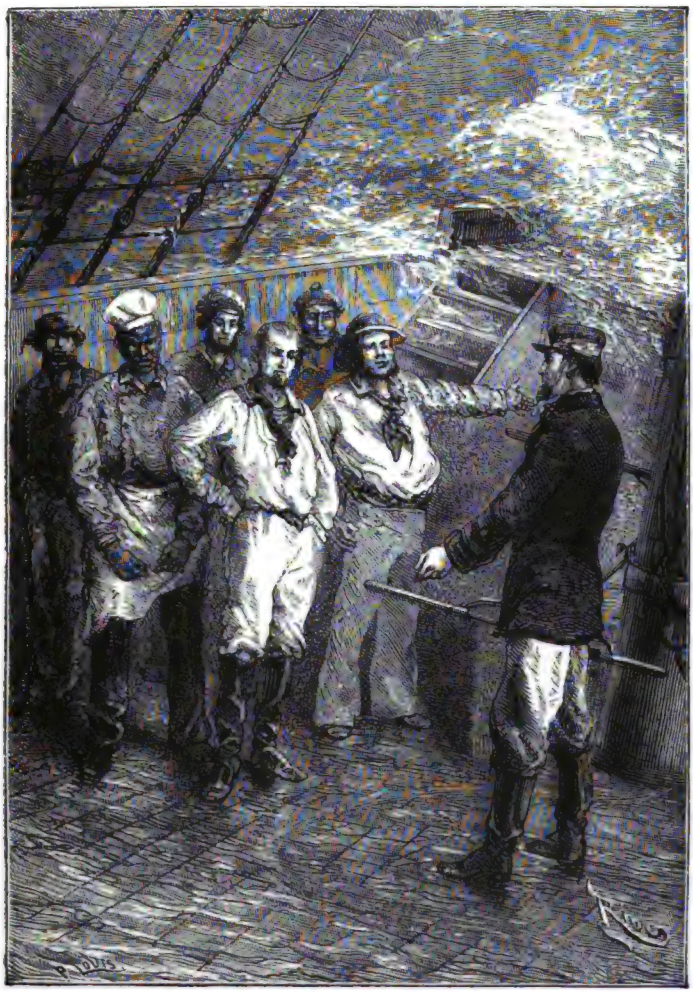

"SOME OF THE SAILORS, OVERCOME BY DESPAIR, REFUSE TO WORK ONE MINUTE LONGER."

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For a moment Owen surveyed the captain with a frown of defiance; but at a sign from Jynxtrop he seemed to recollect himself; and, with the remainder of the men, he returned to his work.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

December 4th.—The first attempt at mutiny being thus happily suppressed, it is to be hoped that Curtis will succeed as well in future. An insubordinate crew would render us powerless indeed.

Throughout the night the pumps were kept, without respite, steadily at work, but without producing the least sensible benefit. The ship became so water-logged and heavy that she hardly rose at all to the waves, which consequently often washed over the deck and contributed their part towards aggravating our case. Our situation was rapidly becoming as terrible as it had been when the fire was raging in the midst of us; and the prospect of being swallowed by the devouring billows was no less formidable than that of perishing in the flames.

Curtis kept the men up to the mark, and, willing or unwilling, they had no alternative but to work on as best they might; but, in spite of all their efforts, the water per-

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petually rose, till, at length, the men in the hold who were passing the buckets found themselves immersed up to their waists and were obliged to come on deck.

This morning, after a somewhat protracted consultation with Walter and the boatswain, Curtis resolved to abandon the ship. The only remaining boat was far too small to hold us all, and it would therefore be necessary to construct a raft that should carry those who could not find room in her. Dowlas the carpenter, Mr. Falsten, and ten sailors were told off to put the raft in hand, the rest of the crew being ordered to continue their work assiduously at the pumps, until the time came and everything was ready for embarkation.

Hatchet or saw in hand, the carpenter and his assistants made a beginning without delay by cutting and trimming the spare yards and extra spars to a proper length. These were then lowered into the sea, which was propitiously calm, so as to favour the operation (which otherwise would have been very difficult) of lashing them together into a firm framework, about forty feet long and twenty-five feet wide, upon which the platform was to be supported.

I kept my own place steadily at the pumps, and André Letourneur worked at my side. I often noticed his father glance at him sorrowfully, as though he wondered what would become of him if he had to struggle with waves to which even the strongest man could hardly fail to succumb.

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But come what may, his father will never forsake him, and I myself shall not be wanting in rendering him whatever assistance I can.

Mrs. Kear, who had been for some time in a state of drowsy unconsciousness, was not informed of the immediate danger, but when Miss Herbey, looking somewhat pale with fatigue, paid one of her flying visits to the deck, I warned her to take every precaution for herself and to be ready for any emergency.

"Thank you, doctor, I am always ready," she cheerfully replied, and returned to her duties below. I saw André follow the young girl with his eyes, and a look of melancholy interest passed over his countenance.

Towards eight o'clock in the evening the framework for the raft was almost complete, and the men were lowering empty barrels, which had first been securely bunged, and were lashing them to the wood-work to insure its floating.

Two hours later and suddenly there arose the startling cry, "We are sinking! we are sinking!"

Up to the poop rushed Mr. Kear, followed immediately by Falsten and Miss Herbey, who were bearing the inanimate form of Mrs. Kear. Curtis ran to his cabin, instantly returning with a chart, a sextant, and a compass in his hand.

The scene that followed will ever be engraven in my memory; the cries of distress, the general confusion, the

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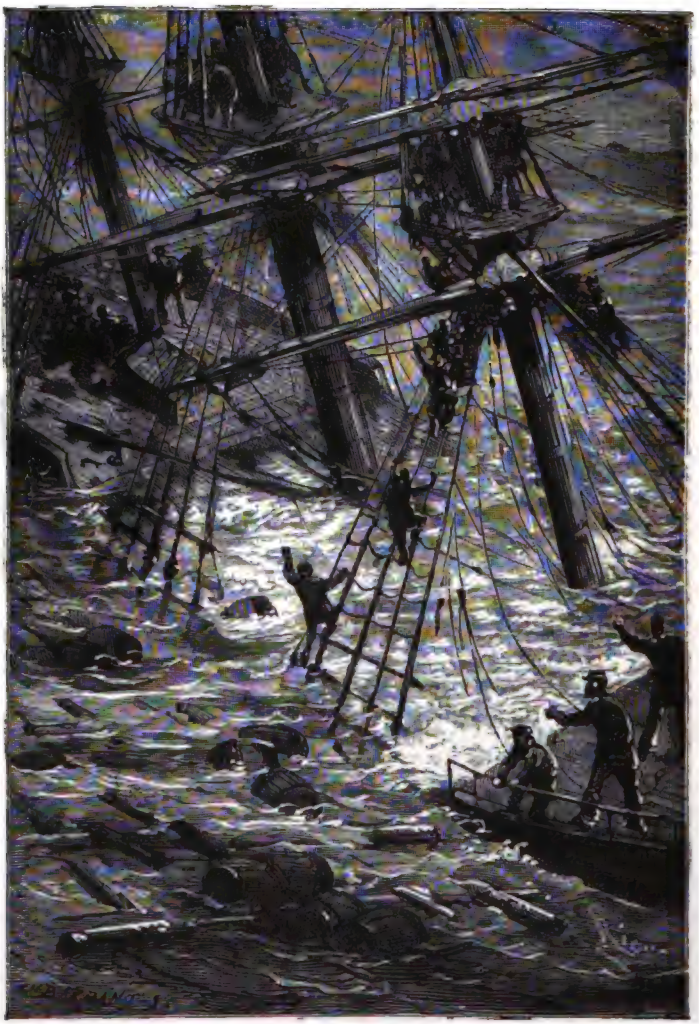

"ALL AT ONCE, THE SHIP CEASED TO SINK."

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frantic rush of the sailors towards the raft that was not yet ready to support them, can never be forgotten. The whole period of my life seemed to be concentrated into that terrible moment when the planks bent below my feet and the ocean yawned beneath me.

Some of the sailors had taken their delusive refuge in the shrouds, and I was preparing to follow them when a hand was laid upon my shoulder. Turning round I beheld M. Letourneur, with tears in his eyes, pointing towards his son. "Yes, my friend," I said, pressing his hand, "we will save him, if possible."

But Curtis had already caught hold of the young man, and was hurrying him to the main-mast shrouds, when the "Chancellor," which had been scudding along rapidly with the wind, stopped suddenly, with a violent shock, and began to settle. The sea rose over my ancles, and almost instinctively I clutched at the nearest rope. All at once, when it seemed all over, the ship ceased to sink, and hung motionless in mid-ocean.

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CHAPTER XXV.

Night of December 4th.—Curtis caught young Letourneur again in his arms, and running with him across the flooded deck deposited him safely in the starboard shrouds, whither his father and I climbed up beside him.

I now had time to look about me. The night was not very dark, and I could see that Curtis had returned to his post upon the poop; whilst in the extreme aft near the taffrail, which was still above water, I could distinguish the forms of Mr. and Mrs. Kear, Miss Herbey, and Mr. Falsten. The lieutenant and the boatswain were on the far end of the forecastle; the remainder of the crew in the shrouds and top-masts.

By the assistance of his father, who carefully guided his feet up the rigging, André was hoisted into the main-top. Mrs. Kear could not be induced to join him in his elevated position, in spite of being told that if the wind were to freshen she would inevitably be washed overboard by the

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waves; nothing could induce her to listen to remonstrance, and she insisted upon remaining on the poop, Miss Herbey, of course, staying by her side.

As soon as the captain saw the "Chancellor" was no longer sinking, he set to work to take down all the sails, yards and all, and the top-gallants, in the hope that by removing everything that could compromise the equilibrium of the ship he might diminish the chance of her capsizing altogether.

"But may she not founder at any moment?" I said to Curtis, when I had joined him for a while upon the poop.

"Everything depends upon the weather," he replied, in his calmest manner; "that, of course, may change at any hour. One thing, however, is certain, the 'Chancellor' preserves her equilibrium for the present."

"But do you mean to say," I further asked, "that she can sail with two feet of water over her deck?"

"No, Mr. Kazallon, she can't sail, but she can drift with the wind, and if the wind remains in its present quarter, in the course of a few days we might possibly sight the coast. Besides, we shall have our raft as a last resource; in a few hours it will be ready, and at daybreak we can embark."

"You have not then," I added, "abandoned all hope even yet?" I marvelled at his composure.

"While there's life there's hope, you know, Mr. Kazallon;

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out of a hundred chances, ninety-nine may be against us, but perhaps the odd one may be in our favour. Besides, I believe that our case is not without precedent. In the year 1795, a three-master, the 'Juno,' was precisely in the same half-sunk, water-logged condition as ourselves; and yet with her passengers and crew clinging to her top-masts she drifted for twenty days until she came in sight of land, when those who had survived the deprivation and fatigue were saved. So let us not despair; let us hold on to the hope that the survivors of the 'Chancellor' may be equally fortunate."

I was only too conscious that there was not much to be said in support of Curtis's sanguine view of things, and that the force of reason pointed all the other way; but I said nothing, deriving what comfort I could from the fact that the captain did not yet despond of an ultimate rescue.

As it was necessary to be prepared to abandon the ship almost at a moment's notice, Dowlas was making every exertion to hurry on the construction of the raft. A little before midnight he was on the point of conveying some planks for this purpose, when, to his astonishment and horror, he found that the framework had totally disappeared. The ropes that had attached it to the vessel had snapped as she became vertically displaced, and probably it had been adrift for more than an hour.

The crew were frantic at this new misfortune, and shout-

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ing "Overboard with the masts!" they began to cut down the rigging preparatory to taking possession of the masts for a new raft.

But here Curtis interposed:—

"Back to your places, my men; back to your places. The ship will not sink yet, so don't touch a rope until I give you leave."

The firmness of the captain's voice brought the men to their senses, and although some of them could ill disguise their reluctance, all returned to their posts.

When daylight had sufficiently advanced Curtis mounted the mast, and looked around for the missing raft; but it was nowhere to be seen. The sea was far too rough for the men to venture to take out the whale-boat in search of it, and there was no choice but to set to work and to construct a new raft immediately.

Since the sea has become so much rougher, Mrs. Kear has been induced to leave the poop, and has managed to join M. Letourneur and his son on the main-top, where she lies in a state of complete prostration. I need hardly add that Miss Herbey continues in her unwearied attendance. The space to which these four people are limited is necessarily very small, nowhere measuring twelve feet across; to prevent them losing their balance some spars have been lashed from shroud to shroud, and for the convenience of the two ladies Curtis has contrived to make a temporary

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awning of a sail. Mr. Kear has installed himself with Silas Huntly on the foretop.

A few cases of preserved meat and biscuit and some barrels of water, that floated between the masts after the submersion of the deck, have been hoisted to the top-masts and fastened firmly to the stays. These are now our only provisions.

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CHAPTER XXVI.

December 5th.—The day was very hot. December in latitude 16° N. is a summer month, and unless a breeze should rise to temper the burning sun, we might expect to suffer from an oppressive heat.

The sea still remained very rough, and as the heavy waves broke over the ship as though she were a reef, the foam flew up to the very top-masts, and our clothes were perpetually drenched by the spray.

The "Chancellor's" hull is three-fourths immerged: besides the three masts and the bowsprit, to which the whale-boat was suspended, the poop and the forecastle are the only portions that now are visible; and as the intervening section of the deck is quite below the water, these appear to be connected only by the framework of the netting that runs along the vessel's sides. Communication between the top-masts is extremely difficult, and would be absolutely precluded, were it not that the sailors, with practised

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dexterity, manage to hoist themselves about by means of the stays. For the passengers, cowering on their narrow and unstable platform, the spectacle of the raging sea below was truly terrific; every wave that dashed over the ship shook the masts till they trembled again, and one could venture scarcely to look or to think lest he should be tempted to cast himself into the vast abyss.

Meanwhile, the crew worked away with all their remaining vigour at the second raft, for which the top-gallants and yards were all obliged to be employed; the planks, too, which were continually being loosened and broken away by the violence of the waves from the partitions of the ship, were rescued before they had drifted out of reach, and were brought into use. The symptoms of the ship foundering did not appear to be immediate; so that Curtis insisted upon the raft being made with proper care to insure its strength; we were still several hundred miles from the coast of Guiana, and for so long a voyage it was indispensable to have a structure of considerable solidity. The reasonableness of this was self-apparent, and as the crew had recovered their assurance they spared no pains to accomplish their work effectually.

Of all the number, there was but one, an Irishman, named O'Ready, who seemed to question the utility of all their toil. He shook his head with an oracular gravity. He is an oldish man, not less than sixty, with his hair and

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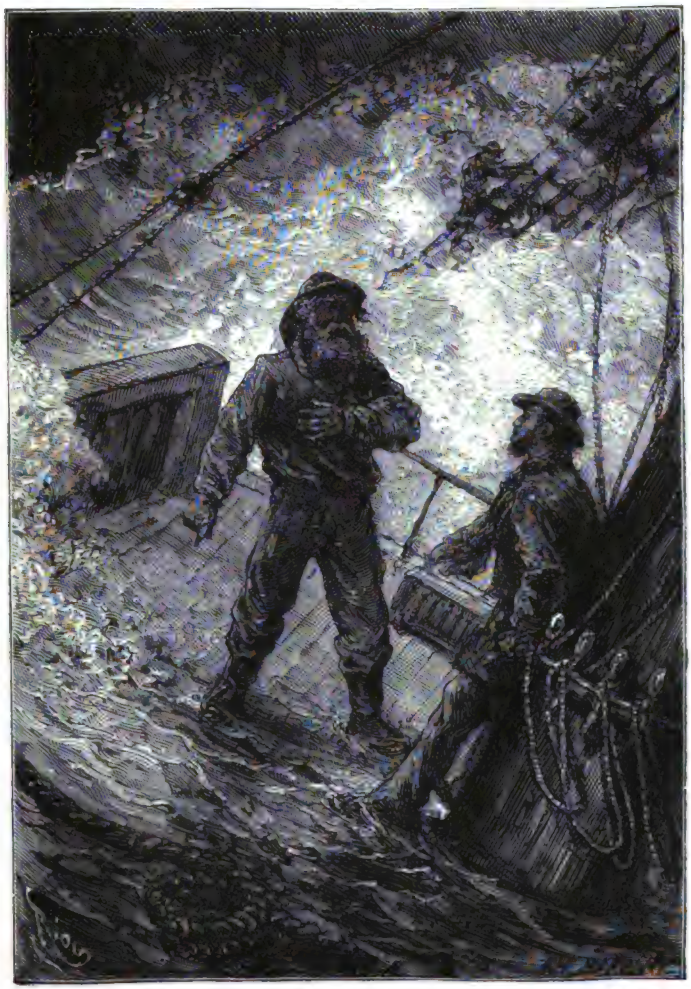

"AN IRISHMAN, NAMED O'READY."

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beard bleached with the storms of many travels. As I was making my way towards the poop, he came up to me and began talking.

"And why, bedad, I'd like to know, why is it that they'll all be afther lavin' of the ship?"

He turned his quid with the most serene composure, and continued,—

"And isn't it me myself that's been wrecked nine times already? and sure, poor fools are they that ever have put their trust in rafts or boats: sure and they found a wathery grave. Nay, nay; while the ould ship lasts, let's stick to her, says I."

Having thus unburdened his mind he relapsed into silence, and soon went away.

About three o'clock I noticed that Mr. Kear and Silas Huntly were holding an animated conversation in the fore-top. The petroleum merchant had evidently some difficulty in bringing the ex-captain round to his opinion, for I saw him several times shake his head as he gave long and scrutinizing looks at the sea and sky. In less than an hour afterwards I saw Huntly let himself down by the forestays and clamber along to the fore-castle, where he joined the group of sailors, and I lost sight of him.

I attached little importance to the incident, and shortly afterwards joined the party in the main-top, where we continued talking for some hours. The heat was intense, and

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if it had not been for the shelter afforded by the sail-tent, would have been unbearable. At five o'clock we took as refreshment some dried meat and biscuit, each individual being also allowed half a glass of water. Mrs. Kear, prostrate with fever, could not touch a mouthful; and nothing could be done by Miss Herbey to relieve her, beyond occasionally moistening her parched lips. The unfortunate lady suffers greatly, and sometimes I am inclined to think that she will succumb to the exposure and privation. Not once had her husband troubled himself about her; but when shortly afterwards I heard him hail some of the sailors on the forecastle and ask them to help him down from the foretop, I began to think that the selfish fellow was coming to join his wife.

At first the sailors took no notice of his request, but on his repeating it with the promise of paying them handsomely for their services, two of them, Burke and Sandon, swung themselves along the netting into the shrouds, and were soon at his side.

A long discussion ensued. The men evidently were asking more than Mr. Kear was inclined to give, and at one time it seemed as though the negotiation would fall through altogether. But at length the bargain was struck, and I saw Mr. Kear take a bundle of paper dollars from his waistcoat pocket, and hand a number of them over to one of the men. The man counted them carefully, and

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from the time it took him, I should think that he could not have pocketed anything less than a hundred dollars.

The next business was to get Mr. Kear down from the foretop, and Burke and Sandon proceeded to tie a rope round his waist, which they afterwards fastened to the fore-stay; then, in a way which provoked shouts of laughter from their mates, they gave the unfortunate man a shove, and sent him rolling down like a bundle of dirty clothes on to the forecastle.

I was quite mistaken as to his object. Mr. Kear had no intention of looking after his wife, but remained by the side of Silas Huntly until the gathering darkness hid them both from view.

As night drew on, the wind grew calmer, but the sea remained very rough. The moon had been up ever since four in the afternoon, though she only appeared at rare intervals between the clouds. Some long lines of vapour on the horizon were tinged with a rosy glare that foreboded a strong breeze for the morrow, and all felt anxious to know from which quarter the breeze would come, for any but a north-easter would bear the frail raft on which we were to embark far away from land.

About eight o'clock in the evening, Curtis mounted to the main-top, but he seemed preoccupied and anxious, and did not speak to any one. He remained for a quarter of

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an hour, then after silently pressing my hand, he returned to his old post.

I laid myself down in the narrow space at my disposal, and tried to sleep; but my mind was filled with strange forebodings, and sleep was impossible. The very calmness of the atmosphere was oppressive; scarcely a breath of air vibrated through the metal rigging, and yet the sea rose with a heavy swell as though it felt the warnings of a coming tempest.

All at once, at about eleven o'clock, the moon burst brightly forth through a rift in the clouds, and the waves sparkled again as if illumined by a submarine glimmer. I start up and look around me. Is it merely imagination? or do I really see a black speck floating on the dazzling whiteness of the waters, a speck that cannot be a rock, because it rises and falls with the heaving motion of the billows? But the moon once again becomes overclouded; the sea is darkened, and I return to my uneasy couch close to the larboard shrouds.

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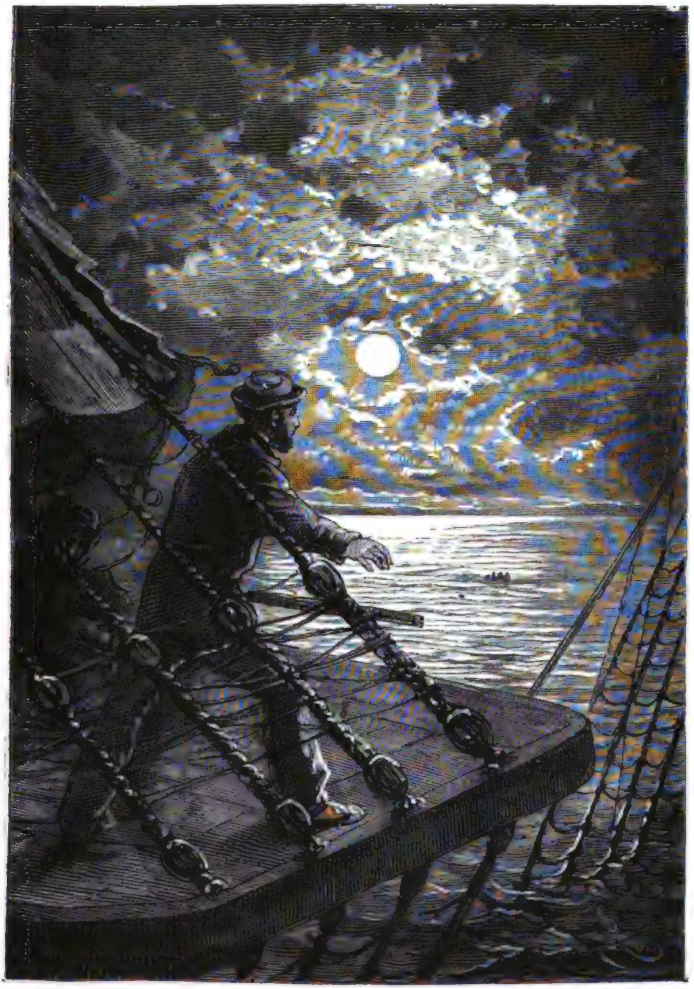

"A BLACK SPECK FLOATING ON THE DAZZLING WHITENESS OF THE WATERS."

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CHAPTER XXVII.

December 6th.—I must have fallen asleep for a few hours, when at four o'clock in the morning, I was rudely aroused by the roaring of the wind, and could distinguish Curtis's voice as he shouted in the brief intervals between the heavy gusts.

I got up, and holding tightly to the purlin—for the waves made the masts tremble with their violence—I tried to look around and below me. The sea was literally raging beneath, and great masses of livid-looking foam were dashing between the masts, which were oscillating terrifically. It was still dark, and I could only faintly distinguish two figures on the stern, whom, by the sound of their voices, that I caught occasionally above the tumult, I made out to be Curtis and the boatswain.

Just at that moment a sailor, who had mounted to the main-top to do something to the rigging, passed close behind me.

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"What's the matter?" I asked.

"The wind has changed," he answered, adding something which I could not hear distinctly, but which sounded like "dead against us."

Dead against us! then, thought I, the wind had shifted to the south-west, and my last night's forebodings had been correct.

When daylight at length appeared, I found the wind, although not blowing actually from the south-west, had veered round to the north-west, a change which was equally disastrous to us, inasmuch as it was carrying us away from land. Moreover, the ship had sunk considerably during the night, and there were now five feet of water above deck; the side netting had completely disappeared, and the forecastle and the poop were now all but on a level with the sea, which washed over them incessantly. With all possible expedition Curtis and his crew were labouring away at their raft, but the violence of the swell materially impeded their operations, and it became a matter of doubt as to whether the woodwork would not fall asunder before it could be properly fastened together.

As I watched the men at their work M. Letourneur, with one arm supporting his son, came and stood by my side.

"Don't you think this main-top will soon give way?" he said, as the narrow platform on which we stood creaked and groaned with the swaying of the masts.

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Miss Herbey heard his words, and pointing towards Mrs. Kear, who was lying prostrate at her feet, asked what we thought ought to be done.

"We can do nothing but stay where we are," I replied.

"No;" said André, "this is our best refuge; I hope you are not afraid."

"Not for myself," said the young girl quietly, "only for those to whom life is precious."

At a quarter to eight we heard the boatswain calling to the sailors in the bows.

"Ay, ay, sir," said one of the men—O'Ready, I think.

"Where's the whale-boat?" shouted the boatswain.

"I don't know, sir. Not with us," was the reply.

"She's gone adrift, then!"

And sure enough the whale-boat was no longer hanging from the bowsprit; and in a moment the discovery was made that Mr. Kear, Silas Huntly, and three sailors,—a Scotchman and two Englishmen,—were missing. Afraid that the "Chancellor" would founder before the completion of the raft, Kear and Huntly had plotted together to effect their escape, and had bribed the three sailors to seize the only remaining boat.

This, then, was the black speck that I had seen during the night. The miserable husband had deserted his wife, the faithless captain had abandoned the ship that had once been under his command.

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"There are five saved, then," said the boatswain.

"Faith, an it's five lost ye'll be maning," said O'Ready; and the state of the sea fully justified his opinion.

The crew were furious when they heard of the surreptitious flight, and loaded the fugitives with all the invectives they could lay their tongues to. So enraged were they at the dastardly trick of which they had been made the dupes, that if chance should bring the deserters again on board I should be sorry to answer for the consequences.

In accordance with my advice, Mrs. Kear has not been informed of her husband's disappearance. The unhappy lady is wasting away with a fever for which we are powerless to supply a remedy, for the medicine-chest was lost when the ship began to sink. Nevertheless, I do not think we have anything to regret on that score, feeling, as I do, that in a case like Mrs. Kear's, drugs would be of no avail.

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CHAPTER XXVIII.

December 6th continued.—The "Chancellor" no longer maintained her equilibrium; we felt that she was gradually going down, and her hull was probably breaking up. The main-top was already only ten feet above the water, whilst the bowsprit, with the exception of the extreme end, that rose obliquely from the waves, was entirely covered.

The "Chancellor's" last day, we felt, had come.

Fortunately the raft was all but finished, and unless Curtis preferred to wait till morning we should be able to embark in the evening.

The raft is a very solid structure. The spars that form the framework are crossed one above another and lashed together with stout ropes, so that the whole pile rises a couple of feet above the water. The upper platform is constructed from the planks that were broken from the ship's sides by the violence of the waves, and which had not drifted away. The afternoon has been employed in

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charging the raft with such provisions, sails, tools, and instruments as we have been able to save.

And how can I attempt to give any idea of the feelings with which, one and all, we now contemplated the fate before us? For my own part I was possessed rather by a benumbed indifference than by any sense of genuine resignation. M. Letourneur was entirely absorbed in his son, who, in his turn, thought only of his father; at the same time exhibiting a calm Christian fortitude, which was shown by no one else of the party except Miss Herbey, who faced her danger with the same brave composure. Incredible as it may seem, Falsten remained the same as ever, occupying himself with writing down figures and memoranda in his pocket-book. Mrs. Kear, in spite of all that Miss Herbey could do for her, was evidently dying.

With regard to the sailors, two or three of them were calm enough, but the rest had well-nigh lost their wits. Some of the more ill-disposed amongst them seemed inclined to run into excesses; and their conduct, under the bad influence of Owen and Jynxtrop, made it doubtful whether they would submit to control when once we were limited to the narrow dimensions of the raft. Lieutenant Walter, although his courage never failed him, was worn out with bodily fatigue, and obliged to give up all active labour; but Curtis and the boatswain were resolute, ener-

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"THE BODY OF THE FIRST VICTIM OF OUR MISERIES WAS COMMITTED TO THE DEEP."

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getic and firm as ever. To borrow an expression from the language of metallurgic art, they were men "at the highest degree of hardness."

At five o'clock one of our companions in misfortune was released from her sufferings. Mrs. Kear, after a most distressing illness, through which her young companion tended her with the most devoted care, has breathed her last. A few deep sighs and all was over, and I doubt whether the sufferer was ever conscious of the peril of her situation.

The night passed on without further incident. Towards morning I touched the dead woman's hand, and it was cold and stiff. The corpse could not remain any longer on the main-top, and after Miss Herbey and I had carefully wrapped the garments about it, with a few short prayers the body of the first victim of our miseries was committed to the deep.

As the sea closed over the body I heard one of the men in the shrouds say,—

"There goes a carcase that we shall be sorry we have thrown away!"

I looked round sharply. It was Owen who had spoken. But horrible as were his words, the conviction was forced upon my mind that the day could not be far distant when we must want for food.

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CHAPTER XXIX.

December 7th.—The ship was sinking rapidly; the water had risen to the fore-top; the poop and forecastle were completely submerged; the top of the bowsprit had disappeared, and only the three mast-tops projected from the waves.

But all was ready on the raft; an erection had been made on the fore to hold a mast, which was supported by shrouds fastened to the sides of the platform; this mast carried a large royal.

Perhaps, after all, these few frail planks will carry us to the shore which the "Chancellor" has failed to reach; at any rate, we cannot yet resign all hope.

We were just on the point of embarking at 7 a.m. when the "Chancellor" all at once began to sink so rapidly that the carpenter and men who were on the raft were obliged with all speed to cut the ropes that secured it to the vessel to prevent it from being swallowed up in the eddying waters.

Anxiety, the most intense, took possession of us all. At

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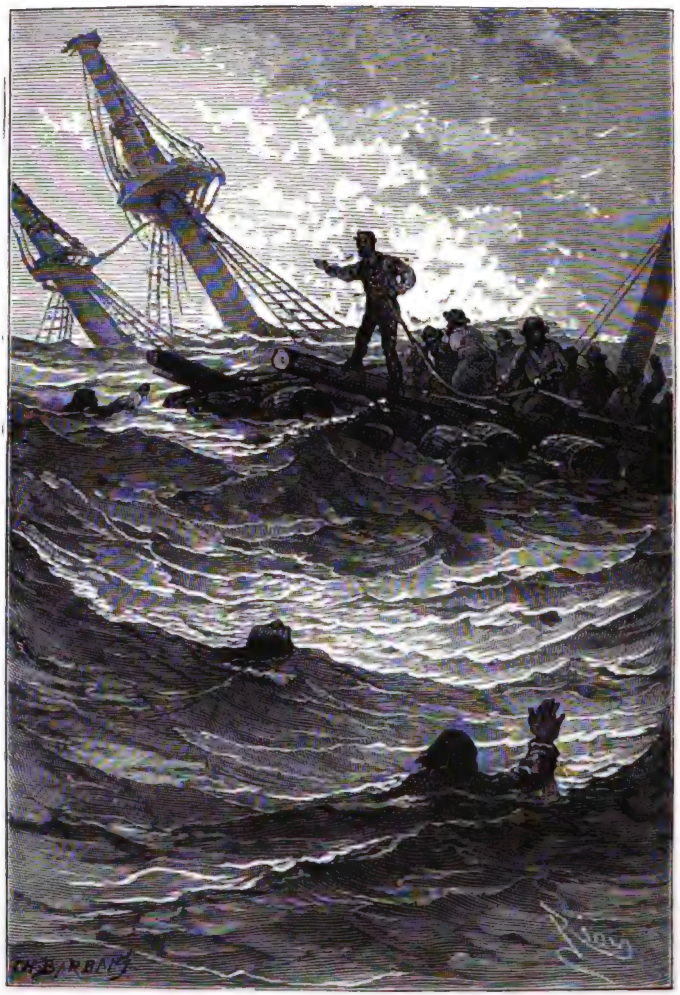

CURTIS TIED A ROPE ROUND HIS WAIST, AND TRIED TO SWIM TO THEIR ASSISTANCE.

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the very moment when the ship was descending into the fathomless abyss, the raft, our only hope of safety, was drifting off before our eyes. Two of the sailors and an apprentice, beside themselves with terror, threw themselves headlong into the sea; but it was evident from the very first that they were quite powerless to combat the winds and waves. Escape was impossible; they could neither reach the raft, nor return to the ship. Curtis tied a rope round his waist and tried to swim to their assistance; but long before he could reach them the unfortunate men, after a vain struggle for life, sank below the waves and were seen no more. Curtis, bruised and beaten with the surf that raged about the mast-heads, was hauled back to the ship.

Meantime, Dowlas and his men, by means of some spars which they used as oars, were exerting themselves to bring back the raft, which had drifted about two cables-lengths away; but, in spite of all their efforts, it was fully an hour,—an hour which seemed to us, waiting as we were with the water up to the level of the top-masts, like an eternity—before they succeeded in bringing the raft alongside, and lashing it once again to the "Chancellor's" main-mast.

Not a moment was then to be lost. The waves were eddying like a whirlpool around the submerged vessel, and numbers of enormous air-bubbles were rising to the surface of the water.

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The time was come. At Curtis's word "Embark!" we all hurried to the raft. André, who insisted upon seeing Miss Herbey go first, was helped safely on to the platform, where his father immediately joined him. In a very few minutes all except Curtis and old O'Ready had left the "Chancellor."

Curtis remained standing on the main-top, deeming it not only his duty, but his right, to be the last to leave the vessel he had loved so well, and the loss of which he so much deplored.

"Now then, old fellow, off of this!" cried the captain to the old Irishman, who did not move.

"And is it quite sure ye are that she's sinkin?" he said.

"Ay, ay! sure enough, my man; and you'd better look sharp."

"Faith, then, and I think I will;" and not a moment too soon (for the water was up to his waist) he jumped on to the raft.

Having cast one last, lingering look around him, Curtis then left the ship; the rope was cut and we went slowly adrift.

All eyes were fixed upon the spot where the "Chancellor" lay foundering. The top of the mizen was the first to disappear, then followed the main-top; and soon, of what had been a noble vessel, not a vestige was to be seen.

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CHAPTER XXX.

WILL this frail float, forty feet by twenty, bear us in safety? Sink it cannot; the material of which it is composed is of a kind that must surmount the waves. But it is questionable whether it will hold together. The cords that bind it will have a tremendous strain to bear in resisting the violence of the sea. The most sanguine amongst us trembles to face the future; the most confident dares to think only of the present. After the manifold perils of the last seventy-two days' voyage all are too agitated to look forward without dismay to what in all human probability must be a time of the direst distress.

Vain as the task may seem, I will not pause in my work of registering the events of our drama, as scene after scene they are unfolded before our eyes.

Of the twenty-eight persons who left Charleston in the "Chancellor," only eighteen are left to huddle together upon this narrow raft; this number includes the five

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passengers, namely, M. Letourneur, André, Miss Herbey, Falsten, and myself; the ship's officers, Captain Curtis, Lieutenant Walter, the boatswain, Hobart the steward, Jynxtrop the cook, and Dowlas the carpenter; and seven sailors, Austin, Owen, Wilson, O'Ready, Burke, Sandon, and Flaypole.

Such are the passengers on the raft; it is but a brief task to enumerate their resources.

The greater part of the provisions in the store-room were destroyed at the time when the ship's deck was submerged, and the small quantity that Curtis has been able to save will be very inadequate to supply the wants of eighteen people, who too probably have many days to wait ere they sight either land or a passing vessel. One cask of biscuit, another of preserved meat, a small keg of brandy, and two barrels of water complete our store, so that the utmost frugality in the distribution of our daily rations becomes absolutely necessary.

Of spare clothes we have positively none; a few sails will serve for shelter by day, and covering by night. Dowlas has his carpenter's tools, we have each a pocket-knife, and O'Ready an old tin pot, of which he takes the most tender care; in addition to these, we are in possession of a sextant, a compass, a chart, and a metal tea-kettle, everything else that was placed on deck in readiness for the first raft having been lost in the partial submersion of the vessel.

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Such then is our situation; critical indeed, but after all perhaps not desperate. We have one great fear; some there are amongst us whose courage, moral as well as physical, may give way, and over failing spirits such as these we may have no control.

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CHAPTER XXXI.

December 7th continued.—Our first day on the raft has passed without any special incident. At eight o'clock this morning Curtis asked our attention for a moment.

"My friends," he said, "listen to me. Here on this raft, just as when we were on board the 'Chancellor,' I consider myself your captain; and as your captain, I expect that all of you will strictly obey my orders. Let me beg of you, one and all, to think solely of our common welfare; let us work with one heart and with one soul, and may Heaven protect us!"

After delivering these few words with an emotion that evidenced their earnestness, the captain consulted his compass, and found that the freshening breeze was blowing from the north. This was fortunate for us, and no time was to be lost in taking advantage of it to speed us on our dubious way. Dowlas was occupied in fixing the mast into the socket that had already been prepared for its

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THE RAFT BEGAN TO MAKE A PERCEPTIBLE PROGRESS UNDER THE BRISK BREEZE.

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reception, and in order to support it more firmly he placed spurs of wood, forming arched buttresses, on either side. While he was thus employed the boatswain and the other seamen were stretching the large royal sail on the yard that had been reserved for that purpose.

By half-past nine the mast was hoisted, and held firmly in its place by some shrouds attached securely to the sides of the raft; then the sail was run up and trimmed to the wind, and the raft began to make a perceptible progress under the brisk breeze.

As soon as we had once started, the carpenter set to work to contrive some sort of a rudder, that would enable us to maintain our desired direction. Curtis and Falsten assisted him with some serviceable suggestions, and in a couple of hours' time he had made and fixed to the back of the raft a kind of paddle, very similar to those used by the Malays.

At noon, after the necessary preliminary observations, Curtis took the altitude of the sun. The result gave lat. 15° 7′ N. by long. 49° 35′ W. as our position, which, on consulting the chart, proved to be about 650 miles north-east of the coast of Paramaribo in Dutch Guiana.

Now even under the most favourable circumstances, with trade-winds and weather always in our favour, we cannot by any chance hope to make more than ten or twelve miles a day, so that the voyage cannot possibly be performed

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under a period of two months. To be sure there is the hope to be indulged that we may fall in with a passing vessel, but as the part of the Atlantic into which we have been driven is intermediate between the tracks of the French and English Transatlantic steamers either from the Antilles or the Brazils, we cannot reckon at all upon such a contingency happening in our favour; whilst if a calm should set in, or worse still, if the wind were to blow from the east, not only two months, but twice, nay, three times that length of time will be required to accomplish the passage.

At best, however, our provisions, even though used with the greatest care, will barely last three months. Curtis has called us into consultation, and as the working of the raft does not require such labour as to exhaust our physical strength, all have agreed to submit to a regimen which, although it will suffice to keep us alive, will certainly not fully satisfy the cravings of hunger and thirst.

As far as we can estimate, we have somewhere about 500 lbs. of meat and about the same quantity of biscuit. To make this last for three months we ought not to consume very much more than 5 lbs. a day of each, which, when divided among eighteen people, will make the daily ration 5 oz. of meat and 5 oz. of biscuit for each person. Of water we have certainly not more than 200 gallons, but by reducing each person's allowance to a pint a day, we hope to eke out that, too, over the space of three months.

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It is arranged that the food shall be distributed under the boatswain's superintendence every morning at ten o'clock. Each person will then receive his allowance of meat and biscuit, which may be eaten when and how he pleases. The water will be given out twice a day—at ten in the morning and six in the evening; but as the only drinking-vessels in our possession are the tea-kettle and the old Irishman's tin pot, the water has to be consumed immediately on distribution. As for the brandy, of which there are only five gallons, it will be doled out with the strictest limitation, and no one will be allowed to touch it except with the captain's express permission.

I should not forget that there are two sources from which we may hope to increase our store. First, any rain that may fall will add to our supply of water, and two empty barrels have been placed ready to receive it; secondly, we hope to do something in the way of fishing, and the sailors have already begun to prepare some lines.

All have mutually agreed to abide by the rules that have been laid down, for all are fully aware that by nothing but the most precise regimen can we hope to avert the horrors of famine, and forewarned by the fate of many who in similar circumstances have miserably perished, we are determined to do all that prudence can suggest for husbanding our stores.

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CHAPTER XXXII.

December 8th to 17th.—When night came we wrapped ourselves in our sails. For my own part, worn out with the fatigue of the long watch in the top-mast, I slept for several hours; M. Letourneur and André did the same, and Miss Herbey obtained sufficient rest to relieve the tired expression that her countenance had lately been wearing. The night passed quietly. As the raft was not very heavily laden the waves did not break over it at all, and we were consequently able to keep ourselves perfectly dry. To say the truth, it was far better for us that the sea should remain somewhat boisterous, for any diminution in the swell of the waves would indicate that the wind had dropped, and it was with a feeling of regret that when the morning came I had to note down "weather calm" in my journal.

In these low latitudes the heat in the day-time is so intense, and the sun burns with such an incessant glare,

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hat the entire atmosphere becomes pervaded with a glowing vapour. The wind, too, blows only in fitful gusts, and through long intervals of perfect calm the sails flap idly and uselessly against the mast. Curtis and the boatswain, however, are of opinion that we are not entirely dependent on the wind. Certain indications, which a sailor's eye alone could detect, make them almost sure that we are being carried along by a westerly current, that flows at the rate of three or four miles an hour. If they are not mistaken, this is a circumstance that may materially assist our progress, and at which we can hardly fail to rejoice, for the high temperature often makes our scanty allowance of water quite inadequate to allay our thirst.

But with all our hardships I must confess that our condition is far preferable to what it was when we were still clinging to the "Chancellor." Here at least we have a comparatively solid platform beneath our feet, and we are relieved from the incessant dread of being carried down with a foundering vessel. In the day-time we can move about with a certain amount of freedom, discuss the weather, watch the sea, and examine our fishing-lines; whilst at night we can rest securely under the shelter of our sails.

"I really think, Mr. Kazallon," said André Letourneur to me a few days after we had embarked, "that our time on board the raft passes as pleasantly as it did upon Ham

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Rock; and the raft has one advantage even over the reef, for it is capable of motion."

"Yes, André," I replied, "as long as the wind continues favourable the raft has decidedly the advantage; but supposing the wind shifts, what then?"

"Oh, we musn't think about that," he said; "let us keep up our courage while we can."

I felt that he was right, and that the dangers we had escaped should make us more hopeful for the future; and I think that nearly all of us are inclined to share his opinion.

Whether the captain is equally sanguine I am unable to say. He holds himself very much aloof, and as he evidently feels that he has the great responsibility of saving other lives than his own, we are reluctant to disturb his silent meditations.

Such of the crew as are not on watch spend the greater portion of their time in dozing on the fore part of the raft. The aft, by the captain's orders, has been reserved for the use of us passengers, and by erecting some uprights we have contrived to make a sort of tent, which affords some shelter from the burning sun. On the whole our bill of health is tolerably satisfactory. Lieutenant Walter is the only invalid, and he, in spite of all our careful nursing, seems to get weaker every day.

André Letourneur is the life of our party, and I have

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never appreciated the young man so well. His originality of perception makes his conversation both lively and entertaining, and as he talks, his wan and suffering countenance lights up with an intelligent animation. His father seems to become more devoted to him than ever, and I have seen him sit for an hour at a time, with his hand resting on his son's, listening eagerly to his every word.

Miss Herbey occasionally joins in our conversation, but although we all do our best to make her forget that she has lost those who should have been her natural protectors, M. Letourneur is the only one amongst us to whom she speaks without a certain reserve. To him, whose age gives him something of the authority of a father, she has told the history of her life—a life of patience and self-denial such as not unfrequently falls to the lot of orphans. She had been, she said, two years with Mrs. Kear, and although now left alone in the world, homeless and without resources, hope for the future does not fail her. The young lady's modest deportment and energy of character command the respect of all on board, and I do not think that even the coarsest of the sailors has either by word or gesture acted towards her in a way that she could deem offensive.

The 12th, 13th, and 14th of December passed away without any change in our condition. The wind continued to blow in irregular gusts, but always in the same direction, and the helm, or rather the paddle at the back of the raft has

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never once required shifting; and the watch, who are posted on the fore, under orders to examine the sea with the most scrupulous attention, have had no change of any kind to report.

At the end of a week we found ourselves growing accustomed to our limited diet, and as we had no manual exertion, and no wear and tear of our physical constitution, we managed very well. Our greatest deprivation was the short supply of water, for, as I said before, the unmitigated heat made our thirst at times very painful.

On the 15th we held high festival. A shoal of fish, of the sparus tribe, swarmed round the raft, and although our tackle consisted merely of long cords baited with morsels of dried meat stuck upon bent nails, the fish were so voracious that in the course of a couple of days we had caught as many as weighed almost 200 lbs., some of which were grilled, and others boiled in sea-water over a fire made on the fore part of the raft. This marvellous haul was doubly welcome, inasmuch as it not only afforded us a change of diet, but enabled us to economize our stores; if only some rain had fallen at the same time we should have been more than satisfied.

Unfortunately the shoal of fish did not remain long in our vicinity. On the 17th they all disappeared, and some sharks, not less than twelve or fifteen feet long, belonging to the species of spotted dog-fish, took their

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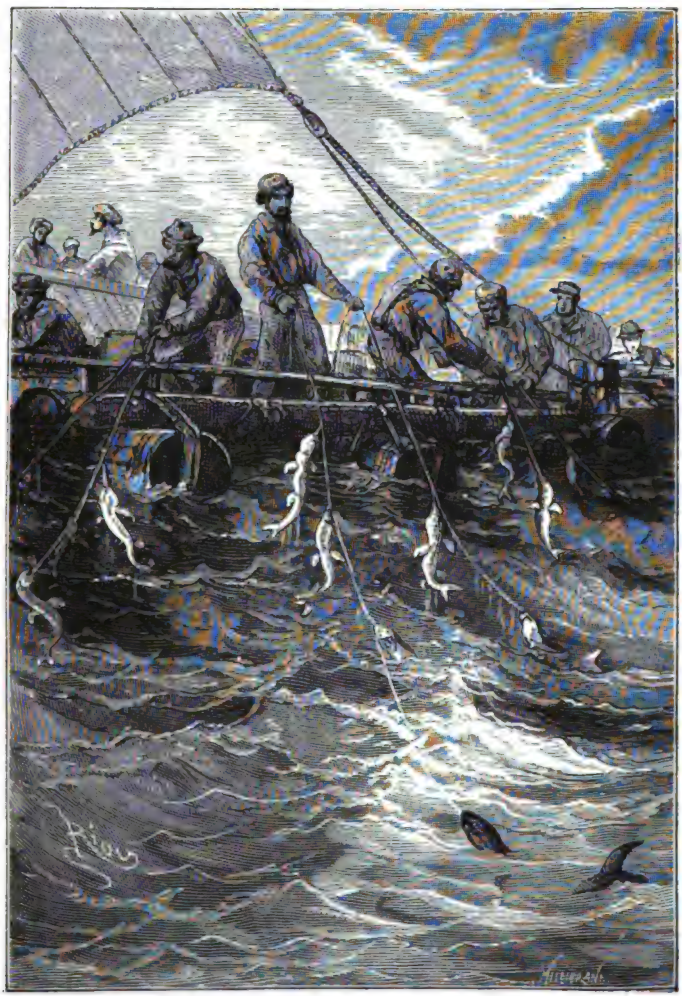

A SHOAL OF FISH, OF THE SPARUS TRIBE, SWARMED ROUND THE RAFT.

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place. These horrible creatures have black backs and fins, covered with white spots and stripes. Here, on our low raft, we seem almost on a level with them, and more than once their tails have struck the spars with terrible violence. The sailors manage to keep them at a distance by means of handspikes, but I shall not be surprised if they persist in following us, instinctively intelligent that we are destined to become their prey. For myself, I confess that they give me a feeling of uneasiness; they seem to me like monsters of ill-omen.

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

December 18th to 20th.—On the 18th the wind freshened a little, but as it blew from the same favourable quarter we did not complain, and only took the precaution of putting an extra support to the mast, so that it should not snap with the tension of the sail. This done, the raft was carried along with something more than its ordinary speed, and left a long line of foam in its wake.

In the afternoon the sky became slightly overclouded, and the heat consequently somewhat less oppressive. The swell made it more difficult for the raft to keep its balance, and we shipped two or three heavy seas; but the carpenter managed to make with some planks a kind of wall about a couple of feet high, which protected us from the direct action of the waves. Our casks of food and water were secured to the raft with double ropes, for we dared not run the risk of their being carried overboard, an accident that would at once have reduced us to the direst distress.

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In the course of the day the sailors gathered some of the marine plants known by the name of sargassos, very similar to those we saw in such profusion between the Bermudas and Ham Rock. I advised my companions to chew the laminary tangles, which they would find contained a saccharine juice, affording considerable relief to their parched lips and throats.

The remainder of the day passed without incident. I should not, however, omit to mention that the frequent conferences held amongst the sailors, especially between Owen, Burke, Flaypole, Wilson, and Jynxtrop, the negro, aroused some uneasy suspicions in my mind. What was the subject of their conversation I could not discover, for they became silent immediately that a passenger or one of the officers approached them. When I mentioned the matter to Curtis I found he had already noticed these secret interviews, and that they had given him enough concern to make him determined to keep a strict eye upon Jynxtrop and Owen, who, rascals as they were themselves, were evidently trying to disaffect their mates.

On the 19th the heat was again excessive. The sky was cloudless, and as there was not enough wind to fill the sail the raft lay motionless upon the surface of the water. Some of the sailors found a transient alleviation for their thirst by plunging into the sea, but as we were fully aware that the water all round was infested with sharks, none of

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us was rash enough to follow their example, though if, as seems likely, we remain long becalmed, we shall probably in time overcome our fears, and feel constrained to indulge ourselves with a bath.

The health of Lieutenant Walter continues to cause us grave anxiety, the young man being weakened by attacks of intermittent fever. Except for the loss of the medicine-chest we might have temporarily reduced this by quinine; but it is only too evident that the poor fellow is consumptive, and that that hopeless malady is making ravages upon him that no medicine could permanently arrest. His sharp dry cough, his short breathing, his profuse perspirations, more especially in the morning; the pinched-in nose, the hollow cheeks, of which the general pallour is only relieved by a hectic flush, the contracted lips, the too brilliant eye and wasted form—all bear witness to a slow but sure decay.

To-day, the 20th, the temperature is as high as ever, and the raft still motionless. The rays of the sun penetrate even through the shelter of our tent, where we sit literally gasping with the heat. The impatience with which we awaited the moment when the boatswain should dole out our meagre allowance of water, and the eagerness with which those lukewarm drops were swallowed, can only be realized by those who for themselves have endured the agonies of thirst.

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Lieutenant Walter suffers more than any of us from the scarcity of water, and I noticed that Miss Herbey reserved almost the whole of her own share for his use. Kind and compassionate as ever, the young girl does all that lies in her power to relieve the poor fellow's sufferings.

"Mr. Kazallon," she said to me this morning, "that young man gets manifestly weaker every day."

"Yes, Miss Herbey, "I replied, "and how sorrowful it is that we can do nothing for him, absolutely nothing."

"Hush!" she said, with her wonted consideration, "perhaps he will hear what we are saying."

And then she sat down near the edge of the raft, where, with her head resting on her hands, she remained lost in thought.

An incident sufficiently unpleasant occurred to-day. For nearly an hour Owen, Flaypole, Burke, and Jynxtrop had been engaged in close conversation and, although their voices were low, their gestures had betrayed that they were animated by some strong excitement. At the conclusion of the colloquy Owen got up and walked deliberately to the quarter of the raft that has been reserved for the use of the passengers.

"Where are you off to now, Owen?" said the boatswain.

"That's my business," said the man insolently, and pursued his course.

The boatswain was about to stop him, but before he

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could interfere Curtis was standing and looking Owen steadily in the face.

"Ah, captain, I've got a word from my mates to say to you," he said, with all the effrontery imaginable.

"Say on, then," said the captain coolly.

"We should like to know about that little keg of brandy. Is it being kept for the porpoises or the officers?"

Finding that he obtained no reply, he went on,—

"Look here, captain, what we want is to have our grog served out every morning as usual."

"Then you certainly will not," said the captain.

"What! what!" exclaimed Owen, "don't you mean to let us have our grog?"

"Once and for all, no."

For a moment, with a malicious grin upon his lips, Owen stood confronting the captain; then, as though thinking better of himself, he turned round and rejoined his companions, who were still talking together in an undertone.

When I was afterwards discussing the matter with Curtis I asked him whether he was sure he had done right in refusing the brandy.

"Right!" he cried, "to be sure I have. Allow those men to have brandy! I would throw it all overboard first."

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CHAPTER XXXIV.

December 21st.—No further disturbance has taken place amongst the men. For a few hours the fish appeared again, and we caught a great many of them, and stored them away in an empty barrel. This addition to our stock of provisions makes us hope that food, at least, will not fail us.

Usually the nights in the tropics are cool, but to-day, as evening drew on, the wonted freshness did not return, but the air remained stifling and oppressive, whilst heavy masses of vapour hung over the water.

There was no moonlight; there would be a new moon at half-past one in the morning, but the night was singularly dark, except for dazzling flashes of summer lightning that from time to time illumined the horizon far and wide. There was, however, no answering roll of thunder, and the silence of the atmosphere seemed almost awful.

For a couple of hours, in the vain hope of catching a

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breath of air, Miss Herbey, André Letourneur, and I, sat watching the imposing struggle of the electric vapours. The clouds appeared like embattled turrets crested with flame, and the very sailors, coarse-minded men as they were, seemed struck with the grandeur of the spectacle, and regarded attentively, though with an anxious eye, the preliminary tokens of a coming storm. Until midnight we kept our seats upon the stern of the raft, whilst the lightning ever and again shed around us a livid glare similar to that produced by adding salt to lighted alcohol.

"Are you afraid of a storm, Miss Herbey?" said André to the girl.

"No, Mr. André, my feelings are always rather those of awe than of fear," she replied. "I consider a storm one of the sublimest phenomena that we can behold—don't you think so too?"

"Yes, and especially when the thunder is pealing," he said; "that majestic rolling, far different to the sharp crash of artillery, rises and falls like the long-drawn notes of the grandest music, and I can safely say that the tones of the most accomplished *artiste* have never moved me like that incomparable voice of nature."

"Rather a deep bass, though," I said, laughing.

"That may be," he answered; "but I wish we might hear it now, for this silent lightning is somewhat unexpressive."

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"Never mind that, André," I said; "enjoy a storm when it comes, if you like, but pray don't wish for it."

"And why not?" said he; "a storm will bring us wind, you know."

"And water, too," added Miss Herbey, "the water of which we are so seriously in need."

The young people evidently wished to regard the storm from their own point of view, and although I could have opposed plenty of common sense to their poetical sentiments, I said no more, but let them talk on as they pleased for fully an hour.

Meantime the sky was becoming quite overclouded, and after the zodiacal constellations had disappeared in the mists that hung round the horizon, one by one the stars above our heads were veiled in dark rolling masses of vapour, from which every instant there issued forth sheets of electricity that formed a vivid background to the dark grey fragments of cloud that floated beneath.

As the reservoir of electricity was confined to the higher strata of the atmosphere, the lightning was still unaccompanied by thunder; but the dryness of the air made it a weak conductor. Evidently the fluid could only escape by terrible shocks, and the storm must ere long burst forth with fearful violence.

This was the opinion of Curtis and the boatswain. The boatswain is only weather-wise from his experience as a

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sailor; but Curtis, in addition to his experience, has some scientific knowledge, and he pointed out to me an appearance in the sky known to meteorologists as a "cloud-ring," and scarcely ever seen beyond the regions of the torrid zone, which are impregnated by damp vapours brought from all quarters of the ocean by the action of the trade-winds.

"Yes, Mr. Kazallon," said Curtis, "our raft has been driven into the region of storms, of which it has been justly remarked that any one endowed with very sensitive organs can at any moment distinguish the growlings of thunder."

"Hark!" I said, as I strained my ears to listen, "I think I can hear it now."

"You can," he answered; "yet what you hear is but the first warning of the storm which, in a couple of hours, will burst upon us with all its fury. But never mind, we must be ready for it."

Sleep, even if we wished it, would have been impossible in that stifling temperature. The lightning increased in brilliancy, and appeared from all quarters of the horizon, each flash covering large arcs, varying from 100° to 150°, leaving the atmosphere pervaded by one incessant phosphorescent glow.

The thunder became at length more and more distinct, the reports, if I may use the expression, being "round," rather than rolling. It seemed almost as though the sky

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"A SQUALL! A SQUALL!"

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were padded with heavy clouds of which the elasticity muffled the sound of the electric bursts.

Hitherto, the sea had been calm, almost stagnant as a pond. Now, however, long undulations took place, which the sailors recognized, all too well, as being the rebound produced by a distant tempest. A ship, in such a case, would have been instantly brought ahull, but no manœuvring could be applied to our raft, which could only drift before the blast.

At one o'clock in the morning one vivid flash, followed, after the interval of a few seconds, by a loud report of thunder, announced that the storm was rapidly approaching. Suddenly the horizon was enveloped in a vapourous fog, and seemed to contract until it was close around us. At the same instant the voice of one of the sailors was heard shouting,—

"A squall! a squall!"

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CHAPTER XXXV.

December 21st, night.—The boatswain rushed to the halliards that supported the sail, and instantly lowered the yard; and not a moment too soon, for with the speed of an arrow the squall was upon us, and if it had not been for the sailor's timely warning we must all have been knocked down and probably precipitated into the sea; as it was, our tent on the back of the raft was carried away.

The raft itself, however, being so nearly level with the water, had little peril to encounter from the actual wind; but from the mighty waves now raised by the hurricane we had everything to dread. At first the waves had been crushed and flattened as it were by the pressure of the air, but now, as though strengthened by the reaction, they rose with the utmost fury. The raft followed the motions of the increasing swell, and was tossed up and down, to and fro, and from side to side with the most violent oscillations.

"Lash yourselves tight," cried the boatswain, as he

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threw us some ropes; and in a few moments, with Curtis's assistance, M. Letourneur, André, Falsten, and myself were fastened so firmly to the raft, that nothing but its total disruption could carry us away. Miss Herbey was bound by a rope passed round her waist to one of the uprights that had supported our tent, and by the glare of the lightning I could see that her countenance was as serene and composed as ever.

Then the storm began to rage indeed. Flash followed flash, peal followed peal in quick succession. Our eyes were blinded, our ears deafened, with the roar and glare. The clouds above, the ocean beneath, seemed verily to have taken fire, and several times I saw forked lightnings dart upwards from the crest of the waves, and mingle with those that radiated from the fiery vault above. A strong odour of sulphur pervaded the air, but though thunderbolts fell thick around us, not one had touched our raft.

By two o'clock the storm had reached its height. The hurricane had increased, and the heavy waves, heated to a strange heat by the general temperature, dashed over us until we were drenched to the skin. Curtis, Dowlas, the boatswain, and the sailors did what they could to strengthen the raft with additional ropes. M. Letourneur placed himself in front of André, to shelter him from the waves. Miss Herbey stood upright and motionless as a statue.

Soon dense masses of lurid clouds came rolling up, and a

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crackling, like the rattle of musketry, resounded through the air. This was produced by a series of electrical concussions, in which volleys of hailstones were discharged from the cloud-batteries above. In fact, as the storm-sheet came in contact with a current of cold air, hail was formed with great rapidity, and hailstones, large as nuts, came pelting down, making the platform of the raft re-echo with a metallic ring.

For about half an hour the meteoric shower continued to descend, and during that time the wind slightly abated in violence; but after having shifted from quarter to quarter, it once more blew with all its former fury. The shrouds were broken, but happily the mast, already bending almost double, was removed by the men from its socket before it should be snapped short off. One gust caught away the tiller, which went adrift beyond all power of recovery, and the same blast blew down several of the planks that formed the low parapet on the larboard side, so that the waves dashed in without hindrance through the breach.

The carpenter and his mates tried to repair the damage, but, tossed from wave to wave, the raft was inclined to an angle of more than forty-five degrees, making it impossible for them to keep their footing, and rolling one over another, they were thrown down by the violent shocks. Why they were not altogether carried away, why we were not all hurled into the sea, was to me a mystery. Even if the

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cords that bound us should retain their hold, it seemed perfectly incredible that the raft itself should not be overturned, so that we should be carried down and stifled in the seething waters.

At last, towards three in the morning, when the hurricane seemed to be raging more fiercely than ever, the raft, caught up on the crest of an enormous wave, stood literally perpendicularly on its edge. For an instant, by the illumination of the lightning, we beheld ourselves raised to an incomprehensible height above the foaming breakers. Cries of terror escaped our lips. All must be over now! But no; another moment, and the raft had resumed its horizontal position. Safe, indeed, we were, but the tremendous upheaval was not without its melancholy consequences. The cords that secured the cases of provisions had burst asunder. One case rolled overboard, and the side of one of the water-barrels was staved in, so that the water which it contained was rapidly escaping. Two of the sailors rushed forward to rescue the case of preserved meat; but one of them caught his foot between the planks of the platform, and, unable to disengage it, the poor fellow stood uttering cries of distress.

I tried to go to his assistance, and had already untied the cord that was round me; but I was too late. Another heavy sea dashed over us, and by the light of a dazzling flash I saw the unhappy man, although he had managed

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without assistance to disengage his foot, washed overboard before it was in my power to get near him. His companion had also disappeared.

The same ponderous wave laid me prostrate on the platform, and as my head came in collision with the corner of a spar, for a time I lost all consciousness.

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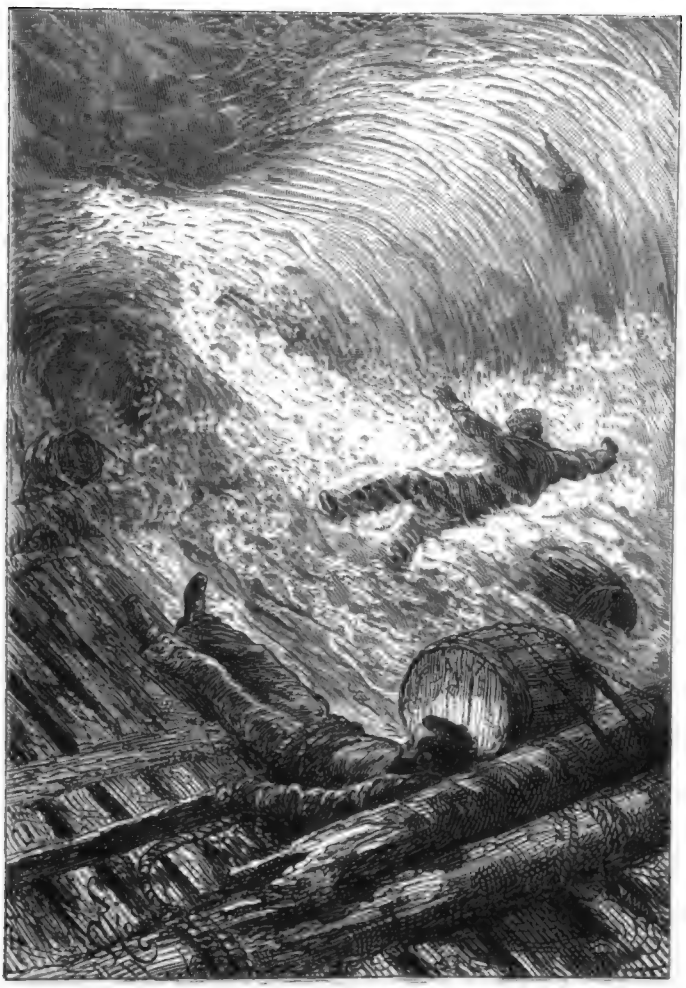

"THE SAME WAVE LAID ME PROSTRATE ON THE PLATFORM."

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CHAPTER XXXVI.

December 22nd.—Daylight came at length, and the sun broke through and dispersed the clouds that the storm had left behind. The struggle of the elements, while it lasted, had been terrific, but the swoon into which I was thrown by my fall prevented me from observing the final incidents of the visitation. All that I know is, that shortly after we had shipped the heavy sea that I have mentioned, a shower of rain had the effect of calming the severity of the hurricane, and tended to diminish the electric tension of the atmosphere.

Thanks to the kind care of M. Letourneur and Miss Herbey, I recovered consciousness, but I believe that it is to Robert Curtis that I owe my real deliverance, for he it was that prevented me from being carried away by a second heavy wave.

The tempest, fierce as it was, did not last more than a few hours; but even in that short space of time what an

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irreparable loss we have sustained, and what a load of misery seems stored up for us in the future!

Of the two sailors who perished in the storm, one was Austin, a fine active young man of about eight-and-twenty; the other was old O'Ready, the survivor of so many shipwrecks. Our party is thus reduced to sixteen souls, leaving a total barely exceeding half the number of those who embarked on board the "Chancellor" at Charleston.

Curtis's first care had been to take a strict account of the remnant of our provisions. Of all the torrents of rain that fell in the night we were unhappily unable to catch a single drop; but water will not fail us yet, for about fourteen gallons still remain in the bottom of the broken barrel, whilst the second barrel has not yet been touched. But of food we have next to nothing. The cases containing the dried meat, and the fish that we had preserved, have both been washed away, and all that now remains to us is about sixty pounds of biscuit. Sixty pounds of biscuit between sixteen persons! Eight days, with half a pound a day apiece, will consume it all.

The day has passed away in silence. A general depression has fallen upon all: the spectre of famine has appeared amongst us, and each has remained wrapped in his own gloomy meditations, though each has doubtless but one idea dominant in his mind.

Once, as I passed near the group of sailors lying on

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the fore part of the raft, I heard Flaypole say with a sneer,—

"Those who are going to die had better make haste about it."

"Yes," said Owen, "and leave their share of food to others."

At the regular hour each person received his half-pound of biscuit. Some, I noticed, swallowed it ravenously; others reserved it for another time. Falsten divided his ration into several portions, corresponding, I believe, to the number of meals to which he was ordinarily accustomed. What prudence he shows! If any one survives this misery, I think it will be he.

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CHAPTER XXXVII.

December 23rd to 30th.—After the storm the wind settled back into its old quarter, blowing pretty briskly from the north-east. As the breeze was all in our favour it was important to make the most of it, and after Dowlas had carefully readjusted the mast, the sail was once more hoisted, and we were carried along at the rate of two or two and a half knots an hour. A new rudder, formed of a spar and a good-sized plank, has been fitted in the place of the one we lost, but with the wind in its present quarter it is in little requisition. The platform of the raft has been repaired, the disjointed planks have been closed by means of ropes and wedges, and that portion of the parapet that was washed away has been replaced, so that we are no longer wetted by the waves. In fact, nothing has been left undone to insure the solidity of our raft, and to render it capable of resisting the wear and tear of the wind and

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waves. But the dangers of wind and waves are not those which we have most to dread.

Together with the unclouded sky came a return of the tropical heat, which during the preceding days had caused us such serious inconvenience; fortunately on the 23rd the excessive warmth was somewhat tempered by the breeze, and as the tent was once again put up, we were able to find shelter under it by turns.

But the want of food was beginning to tell upon us sadly, and our sunken cheeks and wasted forms were visible tokens of what we were enduring. With most of us hunger seemed to attack the entire nervous system, and the constriction of the stomach produced an acute sensation of pain. A narcotic, such as opium or tobacco, might have availed to soothe, if not to cure, the gnawing agony; but of sedatives we had none, so the pain must be endured.

One alone there was amongst us who did not feel the pangs of hunger. Lieutenant Walter seemed as it were to feed upon the fever that raged within him; but then he was the victim of the most torturing thirst. Miss Herbey, besides reserving for him a portion of her own insufficient allowance, obtained from the captain a small extra supply of water, with which every quarter of an hour she moistened the parched lips of the young man, who, almost too weak to speak, could only express his thanks by a grateful

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smile. Poor fellow! all our care cannot avail to save him now; he is doomed, most surely doomed to die.

On the 23rd he seemed to be conscious of his condition, for he made a sign to me to sit down by his side, and then summoning up all his strength to speak, he asked me in a few broken words how long I thought he had to live?

Slight as my hesitation was, Walter noticed it immediately.

"The truth," he said; "tell me the plain truth."

"My dear fellow, I am not a doctor, you know," I began, "and I can scarcely judge—"

"Never mind," he interrupted; "tell me just what you think."

I looked at him attentively for some moments, then laid my ear against his chest. In the last few days his malady had made fearfully rapid strides, and it was only too evident that one lung had already ceased to act, whilst the other was scarcely capable of performing the work of respiration. The young man was now suffering from the fever which is the sure symptom of the approaching end in all tuberculous complaints.

The lieutenant kept his eye fixed upon me with a look of eager inquiry. I knew not what to say, and sought to evade his question.

"My dear boy," I said, "in our present circumstances not one of us can tell how long he has to live. Not one of

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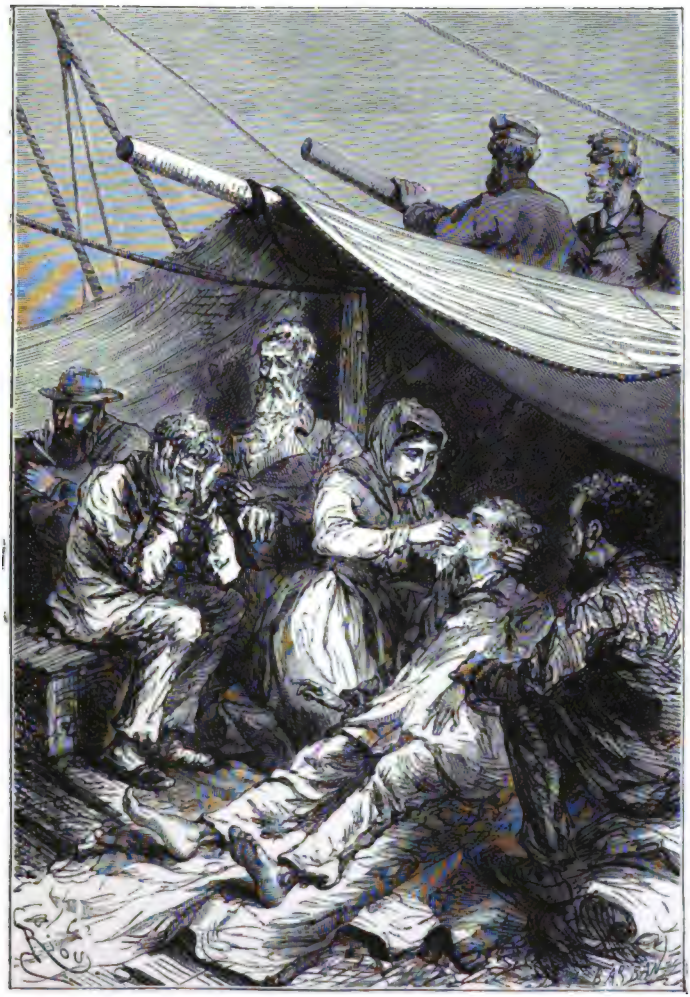

"DOOMED, MOST SURELY DOOMED TO DIE!"

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us knows what may happen in the course of the next eight days."

"The next eight days," he murmured, as he looked eagerly into my face.

And then, turning away his head, he seemed to fall into a sort of doze.

The 24th, 25th, and 26th passed without any alteration in our circumstances, and strange, nay, incredible as it may sound, we began to get accustomed to our condition of starvation. Often, when reading the histories of shipwrecks, I have suspected the accounts to be greatly exaggerated; but now I fully realize their truth, and marvel when I find on how little nutriment it is possible to exist for so long a time. To our daily half-pound of biscuit the captain has thought to add a few drops of brandy, and the stimulant helps considerably to sustain our strength. If we had the same provisions for two months, or even for one, there might be room for hope; but our supplies diminish rapidly, and the time is fast approaching when of food and drink there will be none.

The sea had furnished us with food once, and, difficult as the task of fishing had now become, at all hazards the attempt must be made again. Accordingly the carpenter and the boatswain set to work and made lines out of some untwisted hemp, to which they fixed some nails that they pulled out of the flooring of the raft, and bent into proper

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shape. The boatswain regarded his device with evident satisfaction.

"I don't mean to say," said he to me, "that these nails are first-rate fish-hooks; but one thing I do know, and that is, with proper bait they will act as well as the best. But this biscuit is no good at all. Let me but just get hold of one fish, and I shall know fast enough how to use it to catch some more."

And the true difficulty was how to catch the first fish. It was evident that fish were not abundant in these waters, nevertheless the lines were cast. But the biscuit with which they were baited dissolved at once in the water, and we did not get a single bite. For two days the attempt was made in vain, and as it only involved what seemed a lavish waste of our only means of subsistence, it was given up in despair.

To-day, the 30th, as a last resource, the boatswain tried what a piece of coloured rag might do by way of attracting some voracious fish, and having obtained from Miss Herbey a little piece of the red shawl she wears, he fastened it to his hook. But still no success; for when, after several hours, he examined his lines, the crimson shred was still hanging intact as he had fixed it. The man was quite discouraged at his failure.

"But there will be plenty of bait before long," he said to me in a solemn undertone.

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"What do you mean?" said I, struck by his significant manner.

"You'll know soon enough," he answered.

What did he insinuate? The words, coming from a man usually so reserved, have haunted me all night.

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CHAPTER XXXVIII.

January 1st to 5th.—More than three months had elapsed since we left Charleston in the "Chancellor," and for no less than twenty days had we now been borne along on our raft at the mercy of the wind and waves. Whether we were approaching the American coast, or whether we were drifting farther and farther to sea, it was now impossible to determine, for, in addition to the other disasters caused by the hurricane, the captain's instruments had been hopelessly smashed, and Curtis had no longer any compass by which to direct his course, nor a sextant by which he might make an observation.

Desperate, however, as our condition might be judged, hope did not entirely abandon our hearts, and day after day, hour after hour were our eyes strained towards the far horizon, and many and many a time did our imagination shape out the distant land. But ever and again the illusion vanished; a cloud, a mist, perhaps even a wave, was all

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that had deceived us; no land, no sail ever broke the grey line that united sea and sky, and our raft remained the centre of the wide and dreary waste.

On the 1st of January we swallowed our last morsel of biscuit. The 1st of January! New Year's Day! What a rush of sorrowful recollections overwhelmed our minds! Had we not always associated the opening of another year with new hopes, new plans, and coming joys? And now, where were we? Could we dare to look at one another, and breathe a new year's greeting?

The boatswain approached me with a peculiar look on his countenance.

"You are surely not going to wish me a happy new year?" I said.

"No indeed, sir," he replied, "I was only going to wish you well through the first day of it; and that is pretty good assurance on my part, for we have not another crumb to eat."

True as it was, we scarcely realized the fact of there being actually nothing until on the following morning the hour came round for the distribution of the scanty ration, and then, indeed, the truth was forced upon us in a new and startling light. Towards evening I was seized with violent pains in the stomach, accompanied by a constant desire to yawn and gape that was most distressing; but in a couple of hours the extreme agony passed away, and on the 3rd I

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was surprised to find that I did not suffer more. I felt, it is true, that there was some great void within myself, but the sensation was quite as much moral as physical. My head was so heavy that I could not hold it up; it was swimming with giddiness, as though I were looking over a precipice.

My symptoms were not shared by all my companions, some of whom endured the most frightful tortures. Dowlas and the boatswain especially, who were naturally large eaters, uttered involuntary cries of agony, and were obliged to gird themselves tightly with ropes to subdue the excruciating pain that was gnawing their very vitals.

And this was only the second day of our misery! What would we not have given for half, nay, for a quarter of the meagre ration which a few days back we had deemed so inadequate to supply our wants, and which now, eked out crumb by crumb, might, perhaps, serve for several days? In the streets of a besieged city, dire as the distress may be, some gutter, some rubbish-heap, some corner may yet be found that will furnish a dry bone or a scrap of refuse that may for a moment allay the pangs of hunger; but these bare planks, so many times washed clean by the relentless waves, offer nothing to our eager search, and after every fragment of food that the wind has carried into their interstices has been scraped out and devoured, our resources are literally at an end.

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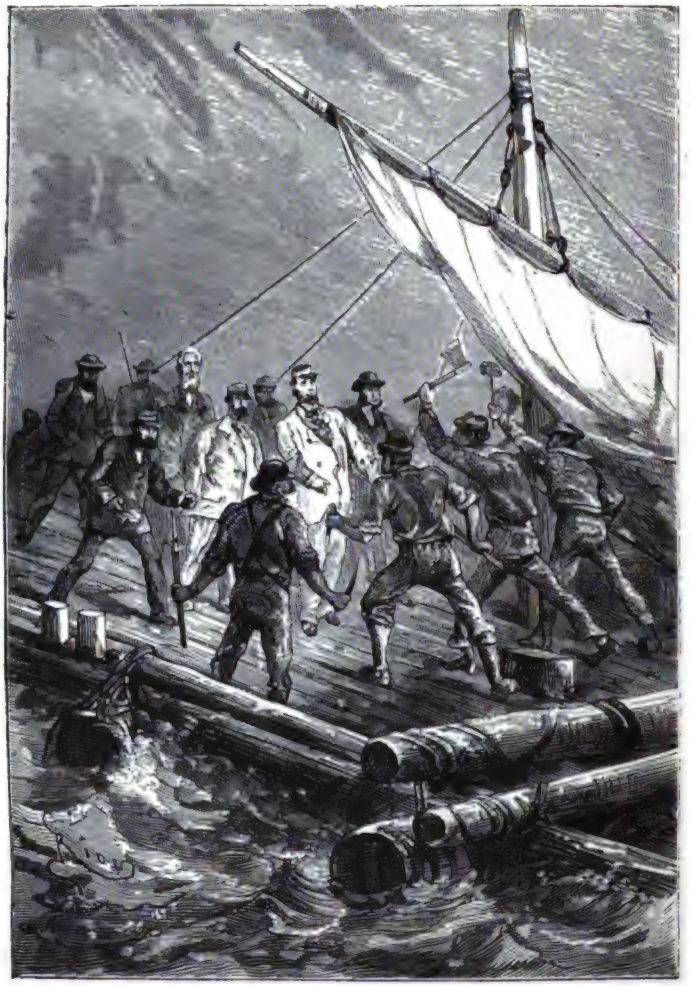

"DOWN WITH THE CAPTAIN!"

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The nights seem even longer than the days. Sleep, when it comes, brings no relief; it is rather a feverish stupour, broken and disturbed by frightful nightmares. Last night, however, overcome by fatigue, I managed to rest for several hours.

At six o'clock this morning I was roused by the sound of angry voices, and, starting up, I saw Owen and Jynxtrop, with Flaypole, Wilson, Burke, and Sandon, standing in a threatening attitude. They had taken possession of the carpenter's tools, and now, armed with hatchets, chisels, and hammers, they were preparing to attack the captain, the boatswain, and Dowlas. I attached myself in a moment to Curtis's party. Falsten followed my example, and although our knives were the only weapons at our disposal, we were ready to defend ourselves to the very last extremity.

Owen and his men advanced towards us. The miserable wretches were all drunk, for during the night they had knocked a hole in the brandy-barrel, and had recklessly swallowed its contents. What they wanted they scarcely seemed to know, but Owen and Jynxtrop, not quite so much intoxicated as the rest, seemed to be urging them on to massacre the captain and the officers.

"Down with the captain! Overboard with Curtis! Owen shall take the command!" they shouted from time to time in their drunken fury; and, armed as they

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were, they appeared completely masters of the situation.

"Now, then, down with your arms!" said Curtis sternly, as he advanced to meet them.

"Overboard with the captain!" howled Owen, as by word and gesture he urged on his accomplices.

Curtis pushed aside the excited rascals, and, walking straight up to Owen, asked him what he wanted.

"What do we want? Why, we want no more captains; we are all equals now."

Poor stupid fool! as though misery and privation had not already reduced us all to the same level.

"Owen," said the captain once again, "down with your arms!"

"Come on, all of you," shouted Owen to his companions, without giving the slightest heed to Curtis's words.

A regular struggle ensued. Owen and Wilson attacked Curtis, who defended himself with a piece of a spar; Burke and Flaypole rushed upon Falsten and the boatswain, whilst I was left to confront the negro Jynxtrop, who attempted to strike me with the hammer which he brandished in his hand. I endeavoured to paralyze his movements by pinioning his arms, but the rascal was my superior in muscular strength. After wrestling for a few moments, I felt that he was getting the mastery over me,

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"THE UNFORTUNATE MAN ROLLED OVER THE SIDE OF THE RAFT."

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when all of a sudden he rolled over on to the platform, dragging me with him. André Letourneur had caught hold of one of his legs, and thus saved my life. Jynxtrop dropped his weapon in his fall; I seized it instantly, and was about to cleave the fellow's skull, when I was myself arrested by André's hand upon my arm.

By this time the mutineers had been driven back to the forepart of the raft, and Curtis, who had managed to parry the blows which had been aimed at him, had caught hold of a hatchet, with which he was preparing to strike at Owen. But Owen made a sidelong movement to avoid the blow, and the weapon caught Wilson full in the chest. The unfortunate man rolled over the side of the raft and instantly disappeared.

"Save him! save him!" shouted the boatswain.

"It's too late; he's dead!" said Dowlas.

"Ah, well! he'll do for —" began the boatswain; but he did not finish his sentence.

Wilson's death, however, put an end to the fray. Flaypole and Burke were lying prostrate in a drunken stupour, and Jynxtrop was soon overpowered, and lashed tightly to the foot of the mast. The carpenter and the boatswain seized hold of Owen.

"Now then," said Curtis, as he raised his blood-stained hatchet, "make your peace with God, for you have not a moment to live."

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"Oh, you want to eat me, do you?" sneered Owen, with the most hardened effrontery.

But the audacious reply saved his life; Curtis turned as pale as death, the hatchet dropped from his hand, and he went and seated himself moodily on the farthest corner of the raft.

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CHAPTER XXXIX.

January 5th and 6th.—The whole scene made a deep impression on our minds, and Owen's speech coming as a sort of climax, brought before us our misery with a force that was well-nigh overwhelming.

As soon as I recovered my composure, I did not forget to thank André Letourneur for the act of intervention that had saved my life.

"Do you thank me for that, Mr. Kazallon?" he said; "it has only served to prolong your misery."

"Never mind, M. Letourneur," said Miss Herbey; "you did your duty."

Enfeebled and emaciated as the young girl is, her sense of duty never deserts her, and although her torn and bedraggled garments float dejectedly about her body, she never utters a word of complaint, and never loses courage.

"Mr. Kazallon," she said to me, "do you think we are fated to die of hunger?"

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"Yes, Miss Herbey, I do," I replied in a hard, cold tone.

"How long do you suppose we have to live?" she asked again.

"I cannot say; perhaps we shall linger on longer than we imagine."

"The strongest constitutions suffer the most, do they not?" she said.

"Yes; but they have one consolation; they die the soonest," I replied coldly.

Had every spark of humanity died out of my breast that I thus brought the girl face to face with the terrible truth without a word of hope or comfort? The eyes of André and his father, dilated with hunger, were fixed upon me, and I saw reproach and astonishment written in their faces.

Afterwards, when we were quite alone, Miss Herbey asked me if I would grant her a favour.

"Certainly, Miss Herbey; anything you like to ask," I replied; and this time my manner was kinder and more genial.

"Mr. Kazallon," she said, "I am weaker than you, and shall probably die first. Promise me that, if I do, you will throw my body into the sea."

"Oh, Miss Herbey," I began, "it was very wrong of me to speak to you as I did!"

"No, no," she replied, half smiling; "you were quite

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right. But it is a weakness of mine; I don't mind what they do with me as long as I am alive, but when I am dead—" she stopped and shuddered. "Oh, promise me that you will throw me into the sea!"

I gave her the melancholy promise, which she acknowledged by pressing my hand feebly with her emaciated fingers.

Another night passed away. At times my sufferings were so intense that cries of agony involuntarily escaped my lips; then I became calmer, and sank into a kind of lethargy. When I awoke, I was surprised to find my companions still alive.

The one of our party who seems to bear his privations the best is Hobart the steward, a man with whom hitherto I have had very little to do. He is small, with a fawning expression remarkable for its indecision, and has a smile which is incessantly playing round his lips; he goes about with his eyes half-closed, as though he wished to conceal his thoughts, and there is something altogether false and hypocritical about his whole demeanour. I cannot say that he bears his privations without a murmur, for he sighs and moans incessantly; but, with it all, I cannot but think that there is a want of genuineness in his manner, and that the privation has not really told upon him as much as it has upon the rest of us. I have my suspicions about the man, and intend to watch him carefully.

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To-day, the 6th, M. Letourneur drew me aside to the stern of the raft, saying that he had a secret to communicate, but that he wished neither to be seen nor heard speaking to me. I withdrew with him to the larboard corner of the raft, and, as it was growing dusk, nobody observed what we were doing.

"Mr. Kazallon," M. Letourneur began in a low voice, "André is dying of hunger: he is growing weaker and weaker, and oh! I cannot, will not see him die!"

He spoke passionately, almost fiercely, and I fully understood his feelings. Taking his hand, I tried to reassure him.

"We will not despair yet," I said, "perhaps some passing ship—"

"Ship!" he cried impatiently, "don't try to console me with empty commonplaces; you know as well as I do that there is no chance of falling in with a passing ship." Then, breaking off suddenly, he asked,—"How long is it since my son and all of you have had anything to eat?"

Astonished at his question, I replied that it was now four days since the biscuit had failed.

"Four days," he repeated; "well, then, it is eight since I have tasted anything. I have been saving my share for my son."

Tears rushed to my eyes; for a few moments I was

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unable to speak, and could only once more grasp his hand in silence.

"What do you want me to do?" I asked at length.

"Hush! not so loud; some one will hear us," he said, lowering his voice, "I want you to offer it to André as though it came from yourself. He would not accept it from me; he would think I had been depriving myself for him. Let me implore you to do me this service, and for your trouble," and here he gently stroked my hand, "for your trouble you shall have a morsel for yourself."

I trembled like a child as I listened to the poor father's words, and my heart was ready to burst when I felt a tiny piece of biscuit slipped into my hand.

"Give it him," M. Letourneur went on under his breath, "give it him; but do not let any one see you; the monsters would murder you if they knew it. This is only for to-day; I will give you some more to-morrow."

The poor fellow did not trust me, and well he might not, for I had the greatest difficulty to withstand the temptation to carry the biscuit to my mouth. But I resisted the impulse, and those alone who have suffered like me can know what the effort was.

Night came on with the rapidity peculiar to these low latitudes, and I glided gently up to André, and slipped the piece of biscuit into his hand as "a present from myself."

The young man clutched at it eagerly.

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"But my father?" he said inquiringly.

I assured him that his father and I had each had our share, and that he must eat this now, and, perhaps, I should be able to bring him some more another time. André asked no more questions, and eagerly devoured the morsel of food.

So this evening at least, notwithstanding M. Letourneur's offer, I have tasted nothing.

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CHAPTER XL.

January 7th.—During the last few days since the wind has freshened, the salt water constantly dashing over the raft has terribly punished the feet and legs of some of the sailors. Owen, whom the boatswain ever since the revolt kept bound to the mast, is in a deplorable state, and at our request has been released from his restraint. Sandon and Burke are also suffering from the severe smarting caused in this way, and it is only owing to our more sheltered position on the aft-part of the raft, that we have not all shared the same inconvenience.

To-day the boatswain, maddened by starvation, laid hands upon everything that met his voracious eyes, and I could hear the grating of his teeth as he gnawed at fragments of sails and bits of wood, instinctively endeavouring to fill his stomach by putting the mucus into circulation. At length, by dint of an eager search, he came upon a piece of leather hanging to one of the spars that supported the platform. He snatched it off and devoured it greedily, and

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as it was animal matter, it really seemed as though the absorption of the substance afforded him some temporary relief. Instantly we all followed his example; a leather hat, the rims of caps, in short, anything that contained any animal matter at all, were gnawed and sucked with the utmost avidity. Never shall I forget the scene. We were no longer human, the impulses and instincts of brute beasts seemed to actuate our every movement.

For a moment the pangs of hunger were somewhat allayed; but some of us revolted against the loathsome food, and were seized either with violent nausea or absolute sickness. I must be pardoned for giving these distressing details, but how otherwise can I depict the misery, moral and physical, which we are enduring? And with it all, I dare not venture to hope that we have reached the climax of our sufferings.

The conduct of Hobart during the scene that I have just described has only served to confirm my previous suspicions of him. He took no part in the almost fiendish energy with which we gnawed at our scraps of leather, and although by his conduct and perpetual groanings, he might be considered to be dying of inanition, yet to me he has the appearance of being singularly exempt from the tortures which we are all enduring. But whether the hypocrite is being sustained by some secret store of food, I have been unable to discover.

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Whenever the breeze drops the heat is overpowering; but although our allowance of water is very meagre, at present the pangs of hunger far exceed the pain of thirst. It has often been remarked that extreme thirst is far less endurable than extreme hunger. Is it possible that still greater agonies are in store for us? I cannot, dare not, believe it. Fortunately, the broken barrel still contains a few pints of water, and the other one has not yet been opened. But I am glad to say that notwithstanding our diminshed numbers, and in spite of some opposition, the captain has thought right to reduce the daily allowance to half a pint for each person. As for the brandy, of which there is only a quart now left, it has been stowed away safely in the stern of the raft.

This evening has ended the sufferings of another of our companions, making our number now only fourteen. My attentions and Miss Herbey's nursing could do nothing for Lieutenant Walter, and about half-past seven he expired in my arms.

Before he died, in a few broken words he thanked Miss Herbey and myself for the kindness we had shown him. A crumpled letter fell from his hand, and in a voice that was scarcely audible from weakness, he said,—

"It is my mother's letter: the last I had from her —she was expecting me home; but she will never see me

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more. Oh, put it to my lips—let me kiss it before I die. Mother! mother! Oh my God!"

I placed the letter in his cold hand, and raised it to his lips; his eye lighted for a moment; we heard the faint sound of a kiss, and all was over!

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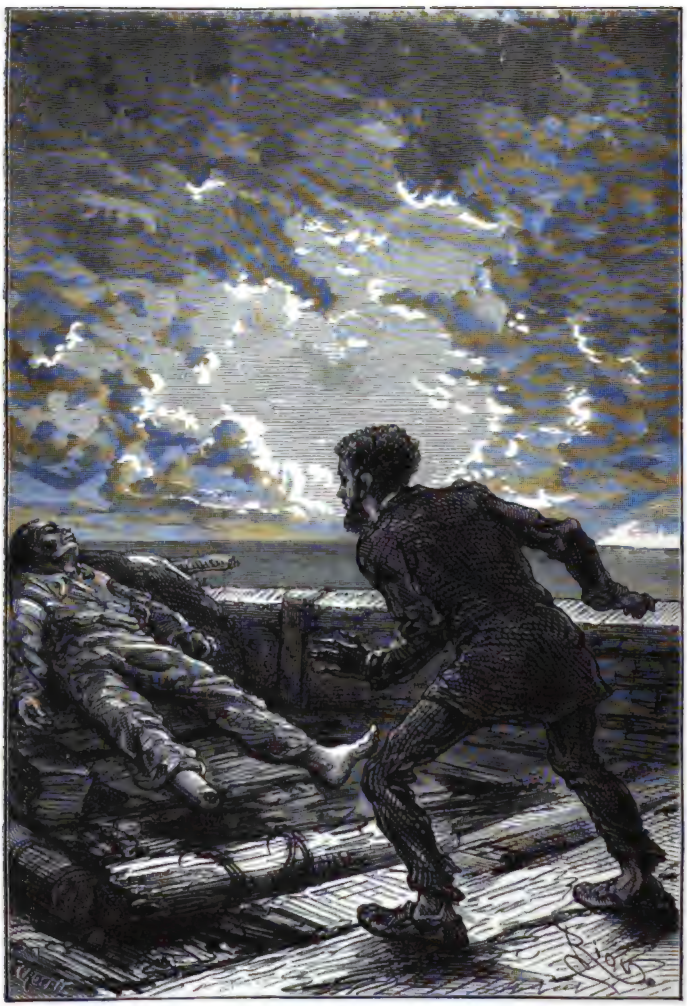

"I STARTED BACK WITH A THRILL OF HORROR."

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CHAPTER XLI.

January 8th.—All night I remained by the side of the poor fellow's corpse, and several times Miss Herbey joined me in my mournful watch.

Before daylight dawned the body was quite cold, and as I knew there must be no delay in throwing it overboard, I asked Curtis to assist me in the sad office. The body was frightfully emaciated, and I had every hope that it would not float.

As soon as it was quite light, taking every precaution that no one should see what we were about, Curtis and I proceeded to our melancholy task. We took a few articles from the lieutenant's pockets, which we purposed, if either of us should survive, to remit to his mother. But as we wrapped him in his tattered garments that would have to suffice for his winding-sheet, I started back with a thrill of horror. The right foot had gone, leaving the leg a bleeding stump!

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No doubt that, overcome by fatigue, I must have fallen asleep for an interval during the night, and some one had taken advantage of my slumber to mutilate the corpse. But who could have been guilty of so foul a deed? Curtis looked around with anger flashing in his eye; but all seemed as usual, and the silence was only broken by a few groans of agony.

But there was no time to be lost; perhaps we were already observed, and more horrible scenes might be likely to occur. Curtis said a few short prayers, and we cast the body into the sea. It sank immediately.

"They are feeding the sharks well, and no mistake," said a voice behind me.

I turned round quickly, and found that it was Jynxtrop who had spoken.

As the boatswain now approached, I asked him whether he thought it possible that any of the wretched men could have taken the dead man's foot.

"Oh yes, I dare say," he replied, in a significant tone, "and perhaps they thought they were right."

"Right! what do you mean?" I exclaimed.

"Well, sir," he said coldly, "isn't it better to eat a dead man than a living one?"

I was at a loss to comprehend him, and, turning away, laid myself down at the end of the raft.

Towards eleven o'clock, a most suspicious incident

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occurred. The boatswain, who had cast his lines early in the morning, caught three large cod, each more than thirty inches long, of the species which, when dried, is known by the name of stock-fish. Scarcely had he hauled them on board, when the sailors made a dash at them, and it was with the utmost difficulty that Curtis, Falsten, and myself could restore order, so that we might divide the fish into equal portions. Three cod were not much amongst fourteen starving persons, but, small as the quantity was, it was allotted in strictly equal shares. Most of us devoured the food raw, almost I might say, alive; only Curtis, André, and Miss Herbey having the patience to wait until their allowance had been boiled at a fire which they made with a few scraps of wood. For myself, I confess that I swallowed my portion of fish just as it was,—raw and bleeding. M. Letourneur followed my example; the poor man devoured his food like a famished wolf, and it is only a wonder to me how, after his lengthened fast, he came to be alive at all.

The boatswain's delight at his success was excessive, and amounted almost to delirium. I went up to him, and encouraged him to repeat his attempt.

"Oh, yes," he said; "I'll try again. I'll try again."

"And why not try at once?" I asked.

"Not now," he said evasively; "the night is the best time for catching large fish. Besides, I must manage to

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get some bait, for we have been improvident enough not to save a single scrap."

"But you have succeeded once without bait; why may you not succeed again?"

"Oh! I had some very good bait last night," he said.

I stared at him in amazement. He steadily returned my gaze, but said nothing.

"Have you none left?" at last I asked.

"Yes!" he almost whispered and left me without another word.

Our meal, meagre as it had been, served to rally our shattered energies; our hopes were slightly raised; there was no reason why the boatswain should not have the same good luck again.

One evidence of the degree to which our spirits were revived was that our minds were no longer fixed upon the miserable present and hopeless future, but we began to recall and discuss the past; and M. Letourneur, André, Mr. Falsten, and I held a long conversation with the captain about the various incidents of our eventful voyage, speaking of our lost companions, of the fire, of the stranding of the ship, of our sojourn on Ham Rock, of the springing of the leak, of our terrible voyage in the top-masts, of the construction of the raft, and of the storm. All these things seemed to have happened so long ago, and yet we were living still. Living, did I say? Ay, if such an existence

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as ours could be called a life, fourteen of us were living still. Who would be the next to go? We should then be thirteen.

"An unlucky number!" said André, with a mournful smile.

During the night the boatswain cast his lines from the stern of the raft, and, unwilling to trust them to any one else, remained watching them himself. In the morning I went to ascertain what success had attended his patience. It was scarcely light, and with eager eyes he was peering down into the water. He had neither seen nor heard me coming.

"Well, boatswain!" I said, touching him on the shoulder.

He turned round quickly.

"Those villainous sharks have eaten every morsel of my bait," he said, in a desponding voice.

"And you have no more left?" I asked.

"No more," he said. Then grasping my arm he added, "and that only shows me that it is no good doing things by halves."

The truth flashed upon me at once, and I laid my hand upon his mouth. Poor Walter!

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CHAPTER XLII.

January 9th and 10th.—On the 9th the wind dropped, and there was a dead calm; not a ripple disturbed the surface of the long undulations as they rose and fell beneath us; and if it were not for the slight current which is carrying us we know not whither, the raft would be absolutely stationary.

The heat was intolerable; our thirst more intolerable still; and now it was that for the first time I fully realized how the insufficiency of drink could cause torture more unendurable than the pangs of hunger. Mouth, throat, pharynx, all alike were parched and dry, every gland becoming hard as horn under the action of the hot air we breathed. At my urgent solicitation the captain was for once induced to double our allowance of water; and this relaxation of the ordinary rule enabled us to attempt to slake our thirst four times in the day, instead of only twice. I use the word "attempt" advisedly; for the

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water at the bottom of the barrel, though kept covered by a sail, became so warm that it was perfectly flat and unrefreshing.

It was a most trying day, and the sailors relapsed into a condition of deep despondency. The moon was nearly full, but when she rose the breeze did not return. Continuance of high temperature in daytime is a sure proof that we have been carried far to the south, and here, on this illimitable ocean, we have long ceased even to look for land; it might almost seem as though this globe of ours had veritably become a liquid sphere!

To-day we are still becalmed, and the temperature is as high as ever. The air is heated like a furnace, and the sun scorches like fire. The torments of famine are all forgotten: our thoughts are concentrated with fevered expectation upon the longed-for moment when Curtis shall dole out the scanty measure of lukewarm water that makes up our ration. O for one good draught, even if it should exhaust the whole supply! At least, it seems as if we then could die in peace!

About noon we were startled by sharp cries of agony, and looking round I saw Owen writhing in the most horrible convulsions. I went towards him, for, detestable as his conduct had been, common humanity prompted me to see whether I could afford him any relief. But before I reached him, a shout from Flaypole arrested my attention.

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The man was up in the mast, and with great excitement pointing to the east.

"A ship! A ship!" he cried.

In an instant all were on their feet. Even Owen stopped his cries and stood erect. It was quite true that in the direction indicated by Flaypole there was a white speck visible upon the horizon. But did it move? Would the sailors with their keen vision pronounce it to be a sail? A silence the most profound fell upon us all. I glanced at Curtis as he stood with folded arms intently gazing at the distant point. His brow was furrowed, and he contracted every feature, as with half-closed eyes, he concentrated his power of vision upon that one faint spot in the far-off horizon.

But at length he dropped his arms and shook his head. I looked again, but the spot was no longer there. If it were a ship, that ship had disappeared; but probably it had been a mere reflection, or, more likely still, only the crest of some curling wave.

A deep dejection followed this phantom ray of hope. All returned to their accustomed places. Curtis alone remained motionless, but his eye no longer scanned the distant view.

Owen now began to shriek more wildly than ever. He presented truly a most melancholy sight; he writhed with the most hideous contortions, and had all the appearance

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of suffering from tetanus. His throat was contracted by repeated spasms, his tongue was parched, his body swollen, and his pulse, though feeble, was rapid and irregular. The poor wretch's symptoms were precisely such as to lead us to suspect that he had taken some corrosive poison. Of course it was quite out of our power to administer any antidote; all that we could devise was to make him swallow something that might act as an emetic. I asked Curtis for a little of the lukewarm water. As the contents of the broken barrel were now exhausted, the captain, in order to comply with my request, was about to tap the other barrel, when Owen started suddenly to his knees, and with a wild, unearthly shriek, exclaimed,—

"No! no! no! of that water I will not touch a drop."

I supposed he did not understand what we were going to do, and endeavoured to explain; but all in vain; he persisted in refusing to taste the water in the second barrel. I then tried to induce vomiting by tickling his uvula, and he brought off some bluish secretion from his stomach, the character of which confirmed our previous suspicions—that he had been poisoned by oxide of copper. We now felt convinced that any efforts on our part to save him would be of no avail. The vomiting, however, had for the time relieved him, and he was able to speak.

Curtis and I both implored him to let us know what he

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had taken to bring about consequences so serious. His reply fell upon us as a startling blow.

The ill-fated wretch had stolen several pints of water from the barrel that had been untouched, and that water had poisoned him!

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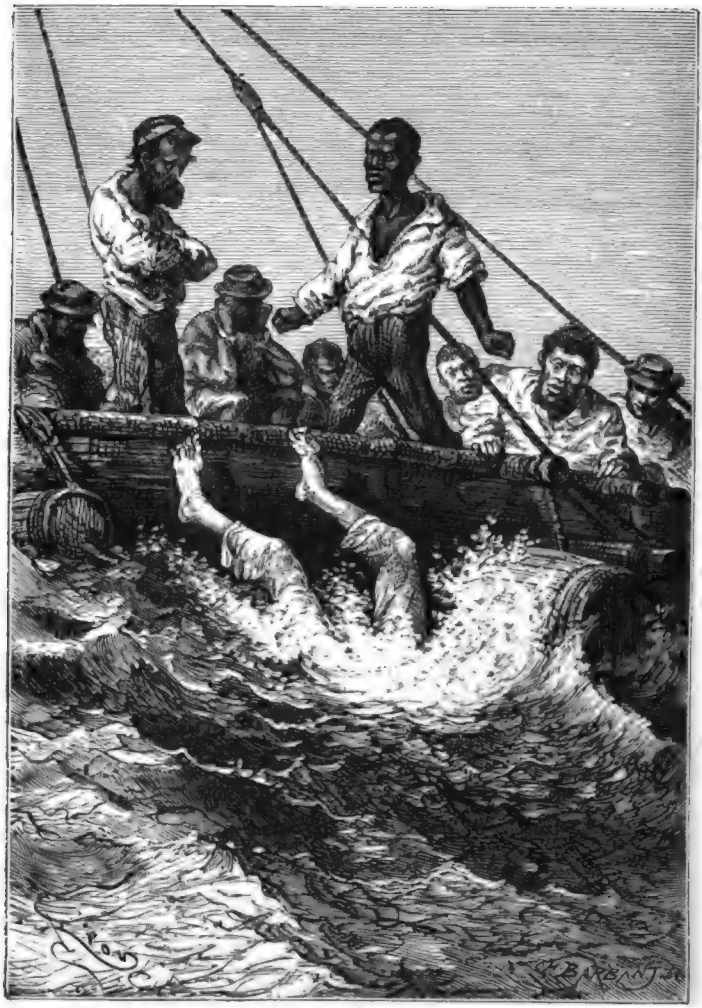

HIS BODY WAS THROWN OVERBOARD.

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CHAPTER XLIII.

January 11th to 14th.—Owen's convulsions returned with increased violence, and in the course of the night he expired in terrible agony. His body was thrown overboard almost directly; it had decomposed so rapidly that the flesh had not even consistency enough for any fragments of it to be reserved for the boatswain to use to bait his lines. A plague the man had been to us in his life; in his death he was now of no service!

And now, perhaps, still more than ever, did the horror of our situation stare us in the face. There was no doubt that the poisoned barrel had at some time or other contained copperas; but what strange fatality had converted it into a water-cask, or what fatality, stranger still, had caused it to be brought on board the raft, was a problem that none could solve. Little, however, did it matter now: the fact was evident; the barrel was poisoned, and of water we had not a drop.

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One and all, we fell into the gloomiest silence. We were too irritable to bear the sound of each other's voices; and it did not require a word, a mere look or gesture was enough, to provoke us to anger that was little short of madness. How it was that we did not all become raving maniacs, I cannot tell.

Throughout the 12th no drain of moisture crossed our lips, and not a cloud arose to warrant the expectation of a passing shower; in the shade, if shade it might be called, the thermometer would have registered at least 100°, and, perhaps, considerably more.

No change next day. The salt water began to chafe my legs, but although the smarting was at times severe, it was an inconvenience to which I gave little heed; others who had suffered from the same trouble had become no worse. Oh! if this water that surrounds us could be reduced to vapour or to ice! its particles of salt extracted, it would be available for drink. But no! we have no appliances, and we must suffer on.

At the risk of being devoured by the sharks, the boatswain and two sailors took a morning bath, and as their plunge seemed to refresh them, I and three of my companions resolved to follow their example. We had never learnt to swim, and had to be fastened to the end of a rope and lowered into the water, while Curtis, during the half-hour of our bath, kept a sharp look-out to give warning of

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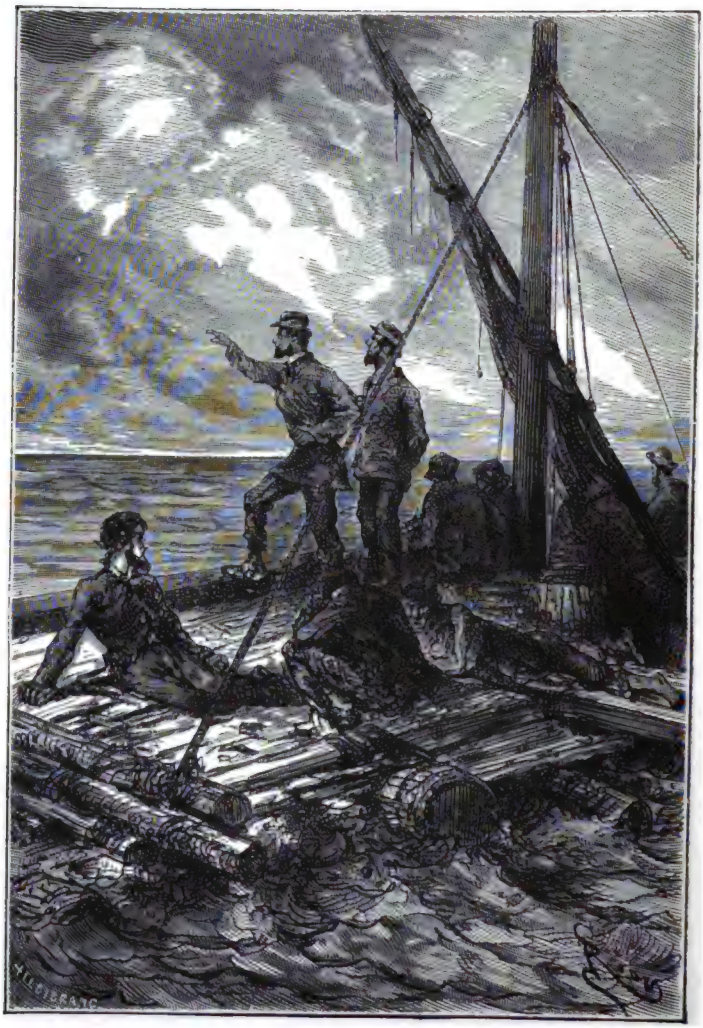

"SHIP AHOY!"

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any danger from approaching sharks. No recommendation, however, on our part, nor any representation of the benefit we felt we had derived, could induce Miss Herbey to allay her sufferings in the same way.

At about eleven o'clock, the captain came up to me, and whispered in my ear,—

"Don't say a word, Mr. Kazallon; I do not want to raise false hopes, but I think I see a ship."

It was as well that the captain had warned me; otherwise, I should have raised an involuntary shout of joy; as it was, I had the greatest difficulty in restraining my expressions of delight.

"Look behind to larboard," he continued in an undertone.

Affecting an indifference which I was far from feeling, I cast an anxious glance to that quarter of the horizon of which he spoke, and there, although mine is not a nautical eye, I could plainly distinguish the outline of a ship under sail.

Almost at the same moment the boatswain who happened to be looking in the same direction, raised the cry, "Ship ahoy!"

Whether it was that no one believed it, or whether all energies were exhausted, certain it is that the announcement produced none of the effects that might have been expected. Not a soul exhibited the slightest emotion, and

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it was only when the boatswain had several times sung out his tidings that all eyes turned to the horizon. There, most undeniably, was the ship, and the question rose at once to the minds of all, and to the lips of many, "Would she see us?"

The sailors immediately began discussing the build of the vessel, and made all sorts of conjectures as to the direction she was taking. Curtis was far more deliberate in his judgment. After examining her attentively for some time, he said, "She is a brig running close upon the wind, on the starboard tack. If she keeps her course for a couple of hours, she will come right athwart our track."

A couple of hours! The words sounded to our ears like a couple of centuries. The ship might change her course at any moment; closely trimmed as she was, it was very probable that she was only tacking about to catch the wind, in which case, as soon as she felt a breeze, she would resume her larboard tack and make away again. On the other hand, if she were really sailing with the wind, she would come nearer to us, and there would be good ground for hope.

Meantime, no exertion must be spared, and no means left untried, to make our position known. The brig was about twelve miles to the east of us, so that it was out of the question to think of any cries of ours being overheard; but Curtis gave directions that every possible signal should

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be made. We had no fire-arms by which we could attract attention, and nothing else occurred to us beyond hoisting a flag of distress. Miss Herbey's red shawl, as being of a colour most distinguishable against the background of sea and sky, was run up to the mast-head, and was caught by the light breeze that just then was ruffling the surface of the water. As a drowning man clutches at a straw, so our hearts bounded with hope every time that our poor flag fluttered in the wind.

For an hour our feelings alternated between hope and despair. The ship was evidently making her way in the direction of the raft, but every now and then she seemed to stop, and then our hearts would almost stand still with agony lest she was going to put about. She carried all her canvas, even to her royals and stay-sails, but her hull was only partially visible above the horizon.

How slowly she advanced! The breeze was very, very feeble, and perhaps soon it would drop altogether! We felt that we would give years of our life to know the result of the coming hour!

At half-past twelve the captain and the boatswain considered that the brig was about nine miles away; she had, therefore, gained only three miles in an hour and a half, and it was doubtful whether the light breeze that had been passing over our heads had reached her at all. I fancied, too, that her sails were no longer filled, but were hanging

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loose against her masts. Turning to the direction of the wind I tried to make out some chance of a rising breeze; but no, the waves were calm and torpid, and the little puff of air that had aroused our hopes had died away across the sea.

I stood aft with M. Letourneur, André, and Miss Herbey, and our glances perpetually wandered from the distant ship to our captain's face. Curtis stood leaning against the mast, with the boatswain by his side; their eyes seemed never for a moment to cease to watch the brig, but their countenances clearly expressed the varying emotions that passed through their minds. Not a word was uttered, nor was the silence broken, until the carpenter exclaimed, in accents of despair,—

"She's putting about!"

All started up: some to their knees, others to their feet. The boatswain dropped a frightful oath. The ship was still nine miles away, and at such a distance it was impossible for our signal to be seen; our tiny raft, a mere speck upon the waters, would be lost in the intense irradiation of the sunbeams. If only we could be seen, no doubt all would be well; no captain would have the barbarous inhumanity to leave us to our fate; but there had been no chance; only too well we knew that we had not been within the range of sight.

"My friends," said Curtis, "we must make a fire; it is our last and only chance."

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Some planks were quickly loosened and thrown into a heap upon the fore part of the raft. They were damp and troublesome to light; but the very dampness made the smoke more dense, and ere long a tall column of dusky fumes was rising straight upwards in the air. If darkness should come on before the brig was completely out of view, the flames we hoped might still be visible. But the hours passed on; the fire died out; and yet no signs of help.

The temper of resignation now deserted me entirely; faith, hope, confidence—all vanished from my mind, and like the boatswain, I swore long and loudly. A gentle hand was laid upon my arm, and turning round I saw Miss Herbey with her finger pointing to the sky. I could stand it no longer, but gliding underneath the tent I hid my face in my hands and wept aloud.

Meanwhile the brig had altered her tack, and was moving slowly to the east. Three hours later and the keenest eye could not have discerned her top-sails above the horizon.

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CHAPTER XLIV.

January 15th.—After this further shattering of our excited hopes death alone now stares us in the face; slow and lingering as that death may be, sooner or later it must inevitably come.

To-day some clouds that rose in the west have brought us a few puffs of wind; and in spite of our prostration, we appreciate the moderation, slight as it is, in the temperature. To my parched throat the air seemed a little less trying; but it is now seven days since the boatswain took his haul of fish, and during that period we have eaten nothing; even André Letourneur finished yesterday the last morsel of the biscuit which his sorrowful and self-denying father had entrusted to my charge.

Jynxtrop the negro has broken loose from his confinement, but Curtis has taken no measures for putting him again under restraint. It is not to be apprehended that the miserable fellow and his accomplices, weakened as

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they are by their protracted fast, will attempt to do us any mischief now.

Some huge sharks made their appearance to-day, cleaving the water rapidly with their great black fins. The monsters came close up to the edge of the raft, and Flaypole, who was leaning over, narrowly escaped having his arm snapped off by one of them. I could not help regarding them as living sepulchres, which ere long might swallow up our miserable carcases; yet, withal, I profess that my feelings were rather those of fascination than of horror.

The boatswain, who stood with clenched teeth and dilated eye, regarded these sharks from quite another point of view. He thought about devouring the sharks, not about the sharks devouring him; and if he could succeed in catching one, I doubt if one of us would reject the tough and untempting flesh. He determined to make the attempt, and as he had no whirl which he could fasten to his rope he set to work to find something that might serve as a substitute. Curtis and Dowlas were consulted, and after a short conversation, during which they kept throwing bits of rope and spars into the water in order to entice the sharks to remain by the raft, Dowlas went and fetched his carpenter's tool, which is at once a hatchet and a hammer. Of this he proposed to make the whirl of which they were in need, under the hope that either the

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sharp edge of the adze or the pointed extremity opposite would stick firmly into the jaws of any shark that might swallow it. The wooden handle of the hammer was secured to the rope, which, in its turn, was tightly fastened to the raft.

With eager, almost breathless, excitement we stood watching the preparations, at the same time using every means in our power to attract the attention of the sharks. As soon as the whirl was ready the boatswain began to think about bait, and, talking rapidly to himself, ransacked every corner of the raft, as though he expected to find some dead body coming opportunely to sight. But his search ended in nothing; and the only plan that suggested itself was again to have recourse to Miss Herbey's red shawl, of which a fragment was wrapped round the head of the hammer. After testing the strength of his line, and reassuring himself that it was fastened firmly both to the hammer and to the raft, the boatswain lowered it into the water.

The sea was quite transparent, and any object was clearly visible to a depth of two hundred feet below the surface. Leaning over the low parapet of the raft we looked on in breathless silence, as the scarlet rag, distinct as it was against the blue mass of water, made its slow descent. But one by one the sharks seemed to disappear. They could not, however, have gone far away, and it was

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not likely that anything in the shape of bait dropped near them would long escape their keen voracity.

Suddenly, without speaking, the boatswain raised his hand and pointed to a dark mass skimming along the surface of the water, and making straight in our direction. It was a shark, certainly not less than twelve feet long. As soon as the creature was about four fathoms from the raft, the boatswain gently drew in his line until the whirl was in such a position that the shark must cross right over it; at the same time he shook the line a little, that he might give the whirl the appearance, if he could, of being something alive and moving. As the creature came near, my heart beat violently; I could see its eyes flashing above the waves; and its gaping jaws, as it turned half over on its back, exhibited long rows of pointed teeth.

I know not who it was, but some one at that moment uttered an involuntary cry of horror. The shark came to a standstill, turned about, and escaped quite out of sight. The boatswain was pale with anger.

"The first man who speaks," he said, "I will kill him on the spot."

Again he applied himself to his task. The whirl again was lowered, this time to the depth of twenty fathoms, but for half an hour or more not a shark could be distinguished; but as the waters far below seemed somehow to be troubled

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I could not help believing that some of the brutes at least were still there.

All at once, with a violent jerk, the cord was wrested from the boatswain's hands; firmly attached, however, as it was to the raft, it was not lost. The bait had been seized by a shark, and the iron had made good its hold upon the creature's flesh.

"Now, then, my lads," cried the boatswain, "haul away!"

Passengers and sailors, one and all, put forth what strength they had to drag the rope, but so violent were the creature's struggles that it required all our efforts (and it is needless to say that they were willing enough) to bring it to the surface. At length, after exertions that almost exhausted us, the water became agitated by the violent flappings of the tail and fins; and looking down I saw the huge carcase of the shark writhing convulsively amidst waves that were stained with blood.

"Steady! steady!" said the boatswain, as the head appeared above.

The whirl had passed right through the jaw into the middle of the throat, so that no struggle on the part of the animal could possibly release it. Dowlas seized his hatchet, ready to despatch the brute the moment it should be landed on the raft. A short sharp snap was heard. The shark had closed its jaws, and bitten through the wooden handle of the hammer. Another

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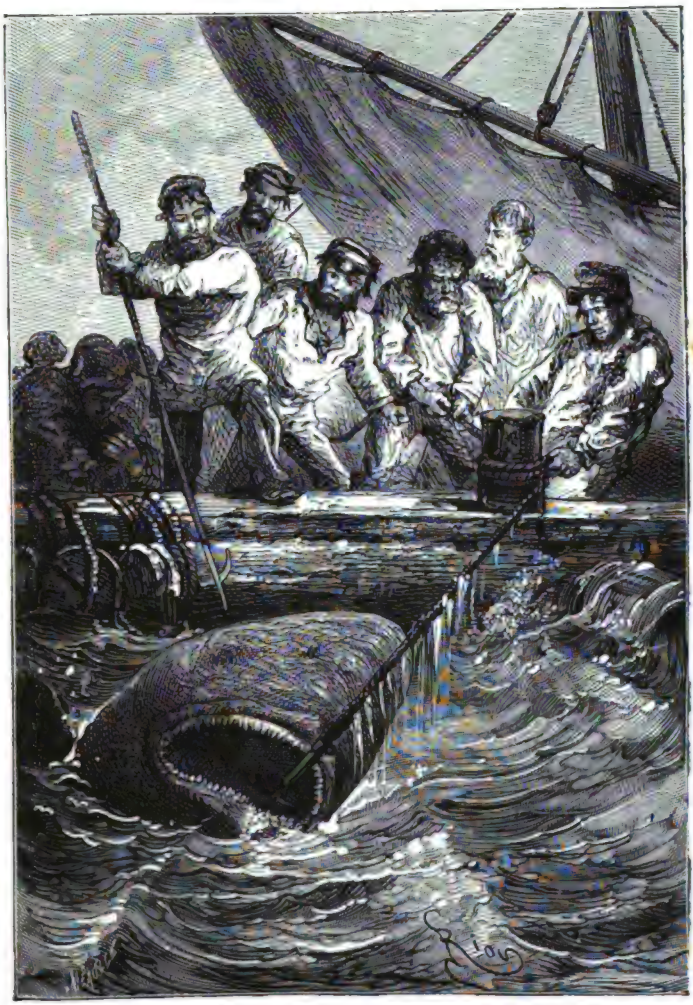

"STEADY! STEADY!"

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moment and it had turned round and was completely gone.

A howl of despair burst from all our lips. All the labour and the patience, all had been in vain. Dowlas made a few more unsuccessful attempts, but as the whirl was lost, and they had no means of replacing it, there was no further room for hope. They did, indeed, lower some cords twisted into running knots, but (as might have been expected) these only slipped over, without holding, the slimy bodies of the sharks. As a last resource the boatswain allowed his naked leg to hang over the side of the raft; the monsters, however, were proof even against this attraction.

Reduced once again to a gloomy despondency, all turned to their places, to await the end that cannot now be long deferred.

Just as I moved away I heard the boatswain say to Curtis,—

"Captain, when shall we draw lots?"

The captain made no reply.

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CHAPTER XLV.

January 16th.—If the crew of any passing vessel had caught sight of us as we lay still and inanimate upon our sail-cloth, they would scarcely, at first sight, have hesitated to pronounce us dead.

My sufferings were terrible: tongue, lips, and throat were so parched and swollen that if food had been at hand I question whether I could have swallowed it. So exasperated were the feelings of us all, however, that we glanced at each other with looks as savage as though we were about to slaughter and without delay eat up one another.

The heat was aggravated by the atmosphere being somewhat stormy. Heavy vapours gathered on the horizon, and there was a look as if it were raining all around. Longing eyes and gasping mouths turned involuntarily towards the clouds, and M. Letourneur, on bended knee, was raising his hands, as it might be in supplication to the relentless skies.

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It was eleven o'clock in the morning. I listened for distant rumblings which might announce an approaching storm, but although the vapours had obstructed the sun's rays, they no longer presented the appearance of being charged with electricity. Thus our prognostications ended in disappointment; the clouds, which in the early morning had been marked by the distinctness of their outline, had melted one into another and assumed an uniform dull grey tint; in fact, we were enveloped in an ordinary fog. But was it not still possible that this fog might turn to rain?

Happily this hope was destined to be realized; for in a very short time, Dowlas, with a shout of delight, declared that rain was actually coming; and sure enough, not half a mile from the raft, the dark parallel streaks against the sky testified that there at least the rain was falling. I fancied I could see the drops rebounding from the surface of the water. The wind was fresh and bringing the cloud right on towards us, yet we could not suppress our trepidation lest it should exhaust itself before it reached us.

But no: very soon large heavy drops began to fall, and the storm-cloud, passing over our heads, was outpouring its contents upon us. The shower, however, was very transient; already a bright streak of light along the horizon marked the limit of the cloud and warned us that we must be quick to make the most of what it had to give us. Curtis had

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placed the broken barrel in the position that was most exposed, and every sail was spread out to the fullest extent our dimensions would allow.

We all laid ourselves down flat upon our backs and kept our mouths wide open. The rain splashed into my face, wetted my lips, and trickled down my throat. Never can I describe the ecstasy with which I imbibed that renovating moisture. The parched and swollen glands relaxed, I breathed afresh, and my whole being seemed revived with a strange and requickened life.

The rain lasted about twenty minutes, when the cloud, still only half exhausted, passed quite away from over us.

We grasped each other's hands as we rose from the platform on which we had been lying, and mutual congratulations, mingled with gratitude, poured forth from our long silent lips. Hope, however evanescent it might be, for the moment had returned, and we yielded to the expectation that, ere long, other and more abundant clouds might come and replenish our store.

The next consideration was how to preserve and economize what little had been collected by the barrel, or imbibed by the outspread sails. It was found that only a few pints of rain-water had fallen into the barrel: to this small quantity the sailors were about to add what they could by wringing out the saturated sails, when Curtis made them desist from their intention.

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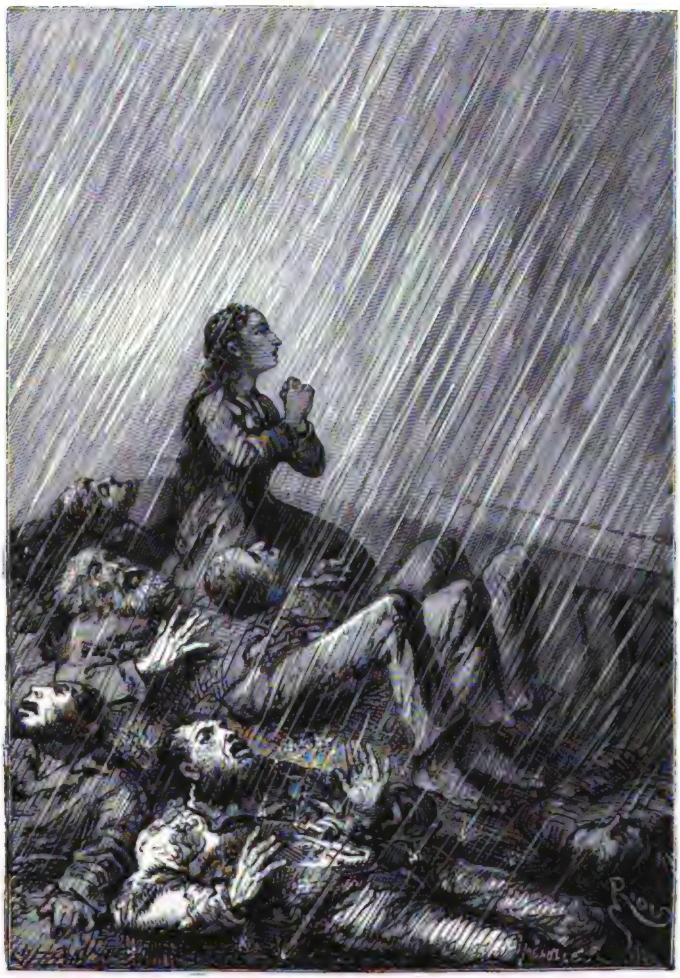

"WE LAID OURSELVES DOWN FLAT UPON OUR BACKS."

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"Stop, stop!" he said, "we must wait a moment; we must see whether this water from the sails is drinkable."

I looked at him in amazement. Why should not this be as drinkable as the other? He squeezed a few drops out of one of the folds of a sail into the tin pot, and put it to his lips. To my surprise, he rejected it immediately, and upon tasting it for myself I found it not merely brackish, but briny as the sea itself. The fact was that the canvas had been so long exposed to the action of the waves, that it had become thoroughly impregnated by salt, which of course was taken up again by the water that fell upon it. Disappointed we were; but with several pints of water in our possession, we were not only contented for the present, but sanguine in our prospect for the future.

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CHAPTER XLVI.

January 17th.—As a natural consequence of the alleviation of our thirst, the pangs of hunger returned more violently than ever. Although we had no bait, and even if we had we could not use it for want of a whirl, we could not help asking whether no possible means could be devised for securing one out of the many sharks that were still perpetually swarming about the raft. Armed with knives, like the Indians in the pearl fisheries, was it not practicable to attack the monsters in their own element? Curtis expressed his willingness personally to make the attempt, but so numerous were the sharks that we would not for one moment hear of his risking his life in a venture of which the danger was as great as the success was doubtful.

By plunging into the sea, or by gnawing at a piece of metal, we could always, or at least often, do something that cheated us into believing that we were mitigating the pains

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of thirst; but with hunger it was different. The prospect, too, of rain seemed hopeful, whilst for getting food there appeared no chance; and, as we knew that nothing could compensate for the lack of nutritive matter, we were soon all cast down again. Shocking to confess, it would be untrue to deny that we surveyed each other with the eye of an eager longing; and I need hardly explain to what a degree of savageness the one idea that haunted us had reduced our feelings.

Ever since the storm-cloud brought us the too transient shower the sky has been tolerably clear, and although at that time the wind had slightly freshened, it has since dropped, and the sail hangs idly against our mast. Except for the trifling relief it brings by modifying the temperature we care little now for any breeze. Ignorant as we are as to what quarter of the Atlantic we have been carried by the currents, it matters very little to us from what direction the wind may blow if only it would bring, in rain or dew, the moisture of which we are so dreadfully in need.

The moon was entering her last quarter, so that it was dark till nearly midnight, and the stars were misty, not glowing with that lustre which is so often characteristic of cool nights. Half frantic with that sense of hunger which invariably returns with redoubled vigour at the close of every day, I threw myself, in a kind of frenzy, upon a

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bundle of sails that was lying on the starboard of the raft, and leaning over, I tried to get some measure of relief by inhaling the moist coolness that rarely fails to circulate just above the water. My brain was haunted by the most horrible nightmares; not that I suppose I was in any way more distressed than my companions, who were lying in their usual places, vainly endeavouring to forget their sufferings in sleep.

After a time I fell into a restless, dreamy doze. I was neither asleep nor awake. How long I remained in that state of stupor I could hardly say, but at length a strange sensation half brought me to myself. Was I dreaming, or was there not really some unaccustomed odour floating in the air? My nostrils became distended, and I could scarcely suppress a cry of astonishment; but some instinct kept me quiet, and I laid myself down again with the puzzled sensation sometimes experienced when we have forgotten a word or name. Only a few minutes, however, had elapsed before another still more savoury puff induced me to take several long inhalations. Suddenly, the truth seemed to flash across my mind. "Surely," I muttered to myself "this must be cooked meat that I can smell."

Again and again I sniffed, and became more convinced than ever that my senses were not deceiving me. But from what part of the raft could the smell proceed? I rose to

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my knees, and having satisfied myself that the odour came from the front, I crept stealthily as a cat under the sails and between the spars in that direction. Following the promptings of my scent, rather than my vision, like a bloodhound in the track of his prey, I searched everywhere I could, now finding, now losing, the smell according to my change of position, or the dropping of the wind. At length I got the true scent, once for all, so that I could go straight to the object for which I was in search.

Approaching the starboard angle of the raft, I came to the conclusion that the smell that had thus keenly excited my cravings was the smell of smoked bacon; the membranes of my tongue almost bristled with the intenseness of my longing.

Crawling along a little farther, under a thick roll of sail-cloth, I was not long in securing my prize. Forcing my arm below the roll, I felt my hand in contact with something wrapped up in paper. I clutched it up, and carried it off to a place where I could examine it by the help of the light of the moon that had now made its appearance above the horizon. I almost shrieked for joy. It was a piece of bacon. True, it did not weigh many ounces, but small as it was it would suffice to alleviate the pangs of hunger for one day at least. I was just on the point of raising it to my mouth, when a hand was laid upon my arm. It was only by a most determined effort that I kept myself from

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screaming out. One instant more, and I found myself face to face with Hobart.

In a moment I understood all. Plainly this rascal Hobart had saved some provision from the wreck, upon which he had been subsisting ever since. The steward had provided for himself, whilst all around him were dying of starvation. Detestable wretch! This accounts for the inconsistency of his well-to-do looks and his pitiable groans. Vile hypocrite!

Yet why, it struck me, should I complain? Was not I reaping the benefit of that secret store that he, for himself, had saved?

But Hobart had no idea of allowing me the peaceable possession of what he held to be his own. He made a dash at the fragment of bacon, and seemed determined to wrest it from my grasp. We struggled with each other, but although our wrestling was very violent, it was very noiseless. We were both of us aware that it was absolutely necessary that not one of those on board should know anything at all about the prize for which we were contending. Nor was my own determination lessened by hearing him groan out that it was his last, his only morsel. "His!" I thought; "it shall be mine now!"

And still careful that no noise of commotion should arise, I threw him on his back, and grasping his throat so that it gurgled again, I held him down until, in rapid

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"WE STRUGGLED WITH EACH OTHER."

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mouthfuls, I had swallowed up the last scrap of the food for which we had fought so hard.

I released my prisoner, and quietly crept back to my own quarters.

And not a soul is aware that I have broken my fast!

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CHAPTER XLVII.

January 18th.—After this excitement I awaited the approach of day with a strange anxiety. My conscience told me that Hobart had the right to denounce me in the presence of all my fellow-passengers; yet my alarm was vain. The idea of my proceedings being exposed by him was quite absurd; in a moment he would himself be murdered without pity by the crew, if it should be revealed that, unknown to them, he had been living on some private store which, by clandestine cunning, he had reserved. But, in spite of my anxiety, I had a longing for day to come.

The bit of food that I had thus stolen was very small; but small as it was it had alleviated my hunger, and I was now tortured with remorse, because I had not shared the meagre morsel with my fellow-sufferers. Miss Herbey, André, his father, all had been forgotten, and from the bottom of my heart I repented of my cruel selfishness.

Meantime the moon rose high in the heavens, and the

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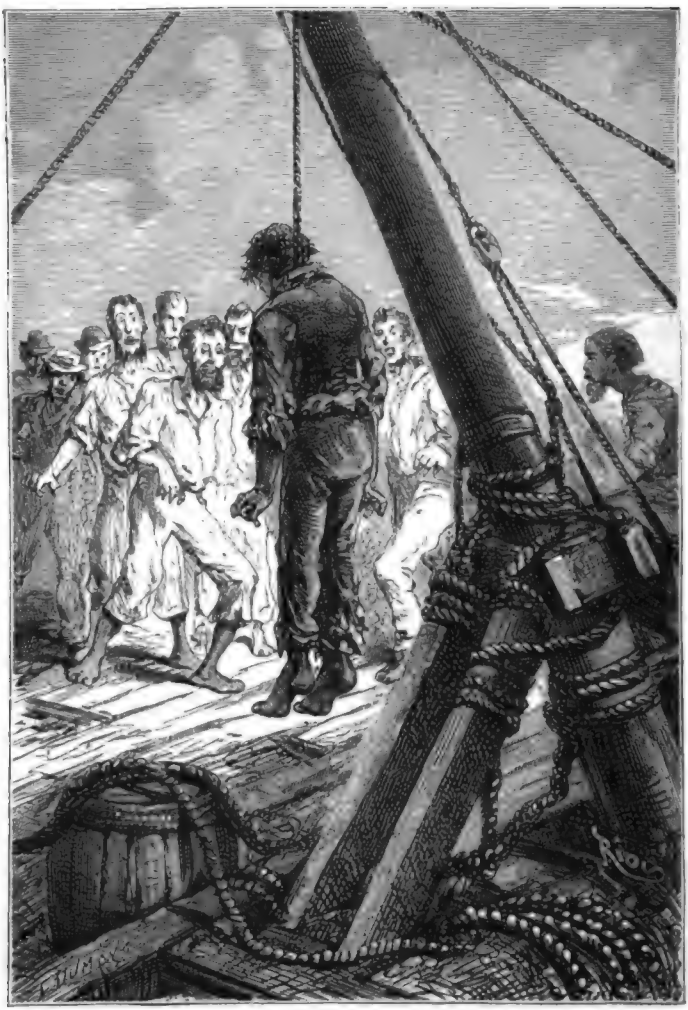

HOBART HAD HANGED HIMSELF.

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first streaks of dawn appeared. There is no twilight in these low latitudes, and the full daylight came well nigh at once. I had not closed my eyes since my encounter with the steward, and ever since the first blush of day I had laboured under the impression that I could see some unusual dark mass half way up the mast. But although it again and again caught my eye, it hardly roused my curiosity, and I did not rise from the bundle of sails on which I was lying to ascertain what it really was. But no sooner did the rays of the sun fall full upon it than I saw at once that it was the body of a man, attached to a rope, and swinging to and fro with the motion of the raft.

A horrible presentiment carried me to the foot of the mast, and, just as I had guessed, Hobart had hanged himself. I could not for a moment doubt that it was I myself that had impelled him to the suicide. A cry of horror had scarcely escaped my lips, when my fellow-passengers were at my side, and the rope was cut. Then came the sailors. And what was it that made the group gather so eagerly around the body? Was it a humane desire to see whether any spark of life remained? No, indeed; the corpse was cold, and the limbs were rigid; there was no chance that animation should be restored. What then was it that kept them lingering so close around? It was only too apparent what they were about to do.

But I did not, could not, look. I refused to take part in

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the horrible repast that was proposed. Neither would Miss Herbey, André, nor his father, consent to alleviate their pangs of hunger by such revolting means. I know nothing for certain as to what Curtis did, and I did not venture to inquire; but of the others,—Falsten, Dowlas, the boatswain, and all the rest,—I know that, to assuage their cravings, they consented to reduce themselves to the level of beasts of prey; they were transformed from human beings into ravenous brutes.

The four of us who sickened at the idea of partaking of the horrid meal withdrew to the seclusion of our tent; it was bad enough to hear, without witnessing the appalling operation. But, in truth, I had the greatest difficulty in the world in preventing André from rushing out upon the cannibals, and snatching the odious food from their clutches. I represented to him the hopelessness of his attempt, and tried to reconcile him by telling him that if they liked the food they had a right to it. Hobart had not been murdered; he had died by his own hand; and, after all, as the boatswain had once remarked to me, "it was better to eat a dead man than a live one."

Do what I would, however, I could not quiet André's feeling of abhorrence; in his disgust and loathing he seemed for the time to have quite forgotten his own sufferings.

Meanwhile, there was no concealing the truth that we

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were ourselves dying of starvation, whilst our eight companions would probably, by their loathsome diet, escape that frightful destiny. Owing to his secret hoard of provisions Hobart had been by far the strongest amongst us; he had been supported, so that no organic disease had affected his tissues, and really might be said to be in good health when his chagrin drove him to his desperate suicide. But what was I thinking of! whither were my meditations carrying me away? was it not coming to pass that the cannibals were rousing my envy instead of exciting my horror?

Very shortly after this I heard Dowlas talking about the possibility of obtaining salt by evaporating sea-water in the sun; "and then," he added, "we can salt down the rest."

The boatswain assented to what the carpenter had said, and probably the suggestion was adopted.

Silence, the most profound, now reigns upon the raft. I presume that nearly all have gone to sleep. One thing I do know, that they are no longer hungry!

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CHAPTER XLVIII.

January 19th.—All through the day the sky remained unclouded and the heat intense; and night came on without bringing much sensible moderation in the temperature. I was unable to get any sleep, and, towards morning, was disturbed by hearing an angry clamour going on outside the tent; it aroused M. Letourneur, André, and Miss Herbey, as much as myself, and we were anxious to ascertain the cause of the tumult.

The boatswain, Dowlas, and all the sailors were storming at each other in frightful rage; and Curtis, who had come forward from the stern, was vainly endeavouring to pacify them.

"But who has done it? we must know who has done it," said Dowlas, scowling with vindictive passion on the group around him.

"There's a thief," howled out the boatswain, "and he shall be found! Let's know who has taken it."

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"I haven't taken it!" "Nor I!" "Nor I!" cried the sailors one after another.

And then they set to work again to ransack every quarter of the raft; they rolled every spar aside, they overturned everything on board, and only grew more and more incensed with anger as their search proved fruitless.

"Can *you* tell us," said the boatswain, coming up to me, "who is the thief?"

"Thief!" I replied. "I don't know what you mean."

And while we were speaking the others all came up together, and told me that they had looked everywhere else, and that they were going now to search the tent.

"Shame!" I said. "You ought to allow those whom you know to be dying of hunger at least to die in peace. There is not one of us who has left the tent all night. Why suspect us?"

"Now just look here, Mr. Kazallon," said the boatswain, in a voice which he was endeavouring to calm down into moderation, "we are not accusing you of anything; we know well enough you, and all the rest of you, had a right to your shares as much as anybody; but that isn't it. It's all gone somewhere, every bit."

"Yes," said Sandon gruffly; "it's all gone somewheres, and we are a going to search the tent."

Resistance was useless, and Miss Herbey, M. Letourneur, and André were all turned out.

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I confess I was very fearful. I had a strong suspicion that for the sake of his son, for whom he was ready to venture anything, M. Letourneur had committed the theft; in that case I knew that nothing would have prevented the infuriated men from tearing the devoted father to pieces. I beckoned to Curtis for protection, and he came and stood beside me. He said nothing, but waited with his hands in his pockets, and I think I am not mistaken in my belief that there was some sort of a weapon in each.

To my great relief the search was ineffectual. There was no doubt that the carcase of the suicide had been thrown overboard, and the rage of the disappointed cannibals knew no bounds.

Yet who had ventured to do the deed? I looked at M. Letourneur and Miss Herbey; but their countenances at once betrayed their ignorance. André turned his face away, and his eyes did not meet my own. Probably it is he; but, if it be, I wonder whether he has reckoned up the consequences of so rash an act.

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CHAPTER XLIX.

January 20th to 22nd.—For the day or two after the horrible repast of the 18th those who had partaken of it appeared to suffer comparatively little either from hunger or thirst; but for the four of us who had tasted nothing, the agony of suffering grew more and more intense. It was enough to make us repine over the loss of the provision that had so mysteriously gone; and if any one of us should die, I doubt whether the survivors would a second time resist the temptation to assuage their pangs by tasting human flesh.

Before long, all the cravings of hunger began to return to the sailors, and I could see their eyes greedily glancing upon us, starved as they knew us to be, as though they were reckoning our hours, and already were preparing to consume us as their prey.

As is always the case with shipwrecked men, we were tormented by thirst far more than by hunger; and if, in the

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height of our sufferings, we had been offered our choice between a few drops of water and a few crumbs of biscuit, I do not doubt that we should, without exception, have preferred to take the water.

And what a mockery to our condition did it seem that all this while there was water, water, nothing but water, everywhere around us! Again and again, incapable of comprehending how powerless it was to relieve me, I put a few drops within my lips, but only with the invariable result of bringing on a most trying nausea, and rendering my thirst more unendurable than before.

Forty-two days had passed since we quitted the sinking "Chancellor." There could be no hope now; all of us must die, and by the most deplorable of deaths. I was quite conscious that a mist was gathering over my brain; I felt my senses sinking into a condition of torpor; I made an effort, but all in vain, to master the delirium that I was aware was taking possession of my reason. It is out of my power to decide for how long I lost my consciousness; but when I came to myself I found that Miss Herbey had folded some wet bandages around my forehead. I am somewhat better; but I am weakened, mind and body, and I am conscious that I have not long to live.

A frightful fatality occurred to-day. The scene was terrible. Jynxtrop the negro went raving mad. Curtis and several of the men tried their utmost to control him,

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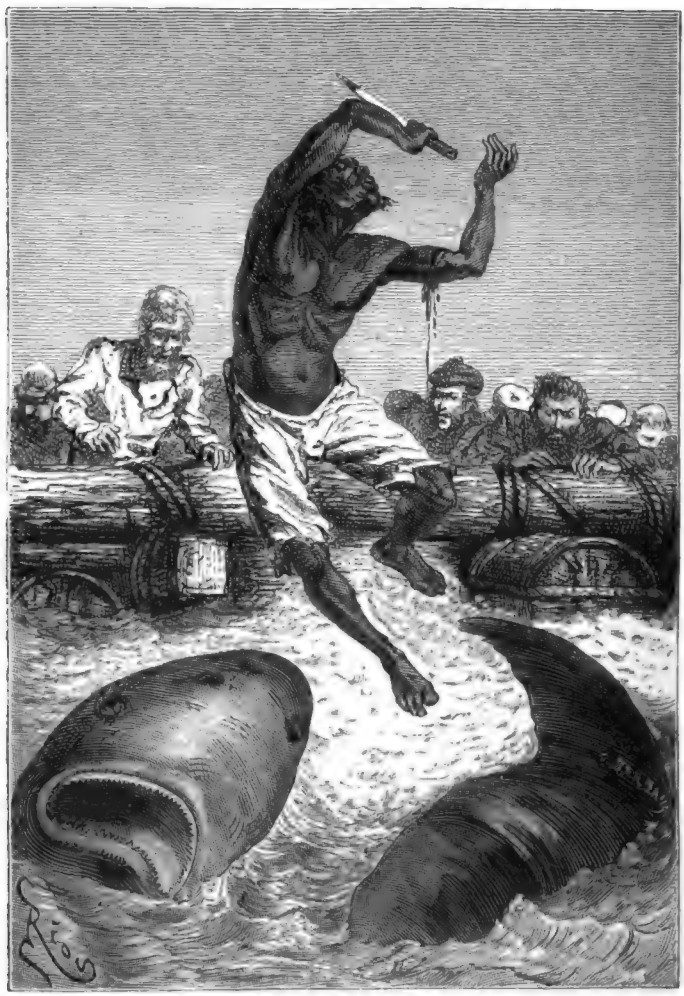

HE MADE A BOUND AND DISAPPEARED BENEATH THE WAVES.

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but in spite of everything he broke loose, and tore up and down the raft, uttering fearful yells. He had gained possession of a handspike, and rushed upon us all with the ferocity of an infuriated tiger; how we contrived to escape mischief from his attacks, I know not. All at once, by one of those unaccountable impulses of madness, his rage turned against himself. With his teeth and nails he gnawed and tore away at his own flesh; dashing the blood into our faces, he shrieked out with a demoniacal grin, "Drink, drink!" and flinging us gory morsels, kept saying "Eat, eat!" In the midst of his insane shrieks he made a sudden pause, then dashing back again from the stern to the front, he made a bound and disappeared beneath the waves.

Falsten, Dowlas, and the boatswain, made a rush that at least they might secure the body; but it was too late; all that they could see was a crimson circle in the water, and some huge sharks disporting themselves around the spot.

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CHAPTER L.

January 23rd.—Only eleven of us now remain; and the probability is very great that every day must now carry off at least its one victim, and perhaps more. The end of the tragedy is rapidly approaching, and save for the chance, which is next to an impossibility, of our sighting land, or being picked up by a passing vessel, ere another week has elapsed not a single survivor of the "Chancellor" will remain.

The wind freshened considerably in the night, and it is now blowing pretty briskly from the north-east. It has filled our sail, and the white foam in our wake is an indication that we are making some progress. The captain reckons that we must be advancing at the rate of about three miles an hour.

Curtis and Falsten are certainly in the best condition amongst us, and in spite of their extreme emaciation they bear up wonderfully under the protracted hardships we

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have all endured. Words cannot describe the melancholy state to which poor Miss Herbey bodily is reduced; her whole being seems absorbed into her soul, but that soul is brave and resolute as ever, living in heaven rather than on earth. The boatswain, strong, energetic man that he was, has shrunk into a mere shadow of his former self, and I doubt whether any one would recognize him to be the same man. He keeps perpetually to one corner of the raft, his head dropped upon his chest, and his long, bony hands lying upon knees that project sharply from his worn-out trowsers. Unlike Miss Herbey, his spirit seems to have sunk into apathy, and it is at times difficult to believe that he is living at all, so motionless and statue-like does he sit.

Silence continues to reign upon the raft. Not a sound, not even a groan, escapes our lips. We do not exchange ten words in the course of the day, and the few syllables that our parched tongue and swollen lips can pronounce are almost unintelligible. Wasted and bloodless, we are no longer human beings; we are spectres.

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CHAPTER LI.

January 24th.—I have inquired more than once of Curtis if he has the faintest idea to what quarter of the Atlantic we have drifted, and each time he has been unable to give me a decided answer, though from his general observation of the direction of the wind and currents he imagines that we have been carried westwards, that is to say, towards the land.

To-day the breeze has dropped entirely, but the heavy swell is still upon the sea, and is an unquestionable sign that a tempest has been raging at no great distance. The raft labours hard against the waves, and Curtis, Falsten, and the boatswain, employ the little energy that remains to them in strengthening the joints. Why do they give themselves such trouble? Why not let the few frail planks part asunder, and allow the ocean to terminate our miserable existence? Certain it seems that our sufferings must have reached their utmost limit, and nothing could

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exceed the torture that we are enduring. The sky pours down upon us a heat like that of molten lead, and the sweat that saturates the tattered clothes that hang about our bodies goes far to aggravate the agonies of our thirst. No words of mine can describe this dire distress; these sufferings are beyond human estimate.

Even bathing, the only means of refreshment that we possessed, has now become impossible, for ever since Jynxtrop's death the sharks have hung about the raft in shoals.

To-day I tried to gain a few drops of fresh water by evaporation, but even with the exercise of the greatest patience, it was with the utmost difficulty that I obtained enough to moisten a little scrap of linen; and the only kettle that we had was so old and battered, that it would not bear the fire, so that I was obliged to give up the attempt in despair.

Falsten is now almost exhausted, and if he survives us at all, it can only be for a few days. Whenever I raised my head I always failed to see him, but he was probably lying sheltered somewhere beneath the sails. Curtis was the only man who remained on his feet, but with indomitable pluck he continued to stand on the front of the raft, waiting, watching, hoping. To look at him, with his unflagging energy, almost tempted me to imagine that he did well to hope, but I dared not entertain one sanguine

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thought, and there I lay, waiting, nay, longing for death.

How many hours passed away thus I cannot tell, but after a time a loud peal of laughter burst upon my ear. Some one else, then, was going mad, I thought; but the idea did not rouse me in the least. The laughter was repeated with greater vehemence, but I never raised my head. Presently I caught a few incoherent words.

"Fields, fields, gardens and trees! Look, there's an inn under the trees! Quick, quick! brandy, gin, water! a guinea a drop! I'll pay for it! I've lots of money! lots! lots!"

Poor deluded wretch! I thought again; the wealth of a nation could not buy a drop of water here. There was silence for a minute, when all of a sudden I heard the shout of "Land! land!"

The words acted upon me like an electric shock, and, with a frantic effort, I started to my feet. No land, indeed, was visible, but Flaypole, laughing, singing, and gesticulating, was raging up and down the raft. Sight, taste, and hearing—all were gone; but the cerebral derangement supplied their place, and in imagination the maniac was conversing with absent friends, inviting them into the George Inn at Cardiff, offering them gin, whisky, and, above all, water! Stumbling at every step, and singing in a cracked, discordant voice, he staggered about amongst us

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like an intoxicated man. With the loss of his senses all his sufferings had vanished, and his thirst was appeased. It was hard not to wish to be a partaker of his hallucination.

Dowlas, Falsten, and the boatswain, seemed to think that the unfortunate wretch would, like Jynxtrop, put an end to himself by leaping into the sea; but, determined this time to preserve the body, that it might serve a better purpose than merely feeding the sharks, they rose and followed the madman everywhere he went, keeping a strict eye upon his every movement.

But the matter did not end as they expected. As though he were really intoxicated by the stimulants of which he had been raving, Flaypole at last sank down in a heap in a corner of the raft, where he lay lost in a heavy slumber.

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CHAPTER LII.

January 25th.—Last night was very misty, and for some unaccountable reason, one of the hottest that can be imagined. The atmosphere was really so stifling, that it seemed as if it only required a spark to set it alight. The raft was not only quite stationary, but did not even rise and fall with any motion of the waves.

During the night I tried to count how many there were now on board, but I was utterly unable to collect my ideas sufficiently to make the enumeration. Sometimes I counted ten, sometimes twelve, and although I knew that eleven, since Jynxtrop was dead, was the correct number, I could never bring my reckoning right. Of one thing I felt quite sure, and that was that the number would very soon be ten. I was convinced that I could myself last but very little longer. All the events and associations of my life passed rapidly through my brain. My country, my friends, and my family all appeared as it were in a vision,

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and seemed as though they had come to bid me a last farewell.

Towards morning I woke from my sleep, if the languid stupour into which I had fallen was worthy of that name. One fixed idea had taken possession of my brain; I would put an end to myself, and I felt a sort of pleasure as I gloated over the power that I had to terminate my sufferings. I told Curtis, with the utmost composure, of my intention, and he received the intelligence as calmly as it was delivered.

"Of course you will do as you please," he said; "for my own part, I shall not abandon my post. It is my duty to remain here, and unless death comes to carry me away, I shall stay where I am to the very last."

The dull grey fog still hung heavily over the ocean, but the sun was evidently shining above the mist, and would, in course of time, dispel the vapour. Towards seven o'clock I fancied I heard the cries of birds above my head. The sound was repeated three times, and as I went up to the captain to ask him about it, I heard him mutter to himself,—

"Birds! why, that looks as if land were not far off."

But although Curtis might still cling to the hope of reaching land, I knew not what it was to have one sanguine thought. For me there was neither continent nor island; the world was one fluid sphere, uniform, monotonous, as in

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the most primitive period of its formation. Nevertheless it must be owned that it was with a certain amount of impatience that I awaited the rising of the mist, for I was anxious to shake off the phantom fallacies that Curtis's words had suggested to my mind.

Not till eleven o'clock did the fog begin to break, and as it rolled in heavy folds along the surface of the water, I could every now and then catch glimpses of a clear blue sky beyond. Fierce sunbeams pierced the cloud-rifts, scorching and burning our bodies like red-hot iron; but it was only above our heads that there was any sunlight to condense the vapour; the horizon was still quite invisible. There was no wind, and for half an hour longer the fog hung heavily round the raft, whilst Curtis, leaning against the side, strove to penetrate the obscurity. At length the sun burst forth in full power, and, sweeping the surface of the ocean, dispelled the fog, and left the horizon opened to our eyes.

There, exactly as we had seen it for the last six weeks, was the circle that bounded sea and sky, unbroken, definite, distinct as ever! Curtis gazed with intensest scrutiny, but did not speak a word. I pitied him sincerely, for he alone of us all felt that he had not the right to put an end to his misery. For myself, I had fully determined that if I lived till the following day, I would die by my own hand. Whether my companions were still alive, I hardly cared to

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FIERCE SUNBEAMS PIERCED THE CLOUD-RIFTS.

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know; it seemed as though days had passed since I had seen them.

Night drew on, but I could not sleep for a moment. Towards two o'clock in the morning my thirst was so intense that I was unable to suppress loud cries of agony. Was there nothing that would serve to quench the fire that was burning within me? What if instead of drinking the blood of others I were to drink my own? It would be all unavailing, I was well aware, but scarcely had the thought crossed my mind, than I proceeded to put it into execution. I unclasped my knife, and, stripping my arm, with a steady thrust I opened a small vein. The blood oozed out slowly, drop by drop, and as I eagerly swallowed the source of my very life, I felt that for a moment my torments were relieved. But only for a moment; all energy had failed my pulses, and almost immediately the blood had ceased to flow.

How long it seemed before the morning dawned! and when that morning came it brought another fog, heavy as before, that again shut out the horizon. The fog was hot as the burning steam that issues from a boiler. It was to be my last day upon earth, and I felt that I should like to press the hand of a friend before I died. Curtis was standing near, and crawling up to him, I took his hand in my own. He seemed to know that I was taking my farewell, and with one last lingering hope he endeavoured to

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restrain me. But all in vain, my mind was finally made up.

I should have liked to speak once again to M. Letourneur, André, and Miss Herbey, but my courage failed me. I knew that the young girl would read my resolution in my eyes, and that she would speak to me of duty and of God, and of eternity, and I dared not meet her gaze; and I would not run the risk of being persuaded to wait until a lingering death should overtake me. I returned to the back of the raft, and after making several efforts, I managed to get on to my feet. I cast one long look at the pitiless ocean and the unbroken horizon; if a sail or the outline of a coast had broken on my view, I believe that I should only have deemed myself the victim of an illusion; but nothing of the kind appeared, and the sea was dreary as a desert.

It was ten o'clock in the morning. The pangs of hunger and the torments of thirst were racking me with redoubled vigour. All instinct of self-preservation had left me, and I felt that the hour had come when I must cease to suffer. Just as I was on the point of casting myself headlong into the sea, a voice, which I recognized as Dowlas's, broke upon my ear.

"Captain," he said, "we are going to draw lots."

Involuntarily I paused; I did not take my plunge, but returned to my place upon the raft.

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CHAPTER LIII.

January 26th.—All heard and understood the proposition; in fact, it had been in contemplation for several days, but no one had ventured to put the idea into words. However, it was done now; lots were to be drawn, and to each would be assigned his share of the body of the one ordained by fate to be the victim. For my own part, I profess that I was quite resigned for the lot to fall upon myself. I thought I heard André Letourneur beg for an exception to be made in favour of Miss Herbey, but the sailors raised a murmur of dissent. As there were eleven of us on board, there were ten chances to one in each one's favour, a proportion which would be diminished if Miss Herbey were excluded, so that the young lady was forced to take her chance among the rest.

It was then half-past ten, and the boatswain, who had been roused from his lethargy by what the carpenter had said, insisted that the drawing should take place imme-

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diately. There was no reason for postponing the fatal lottery. There was not one of us that clung in the least to life, and we knew that at the worst, whoever should be doomed to die, would only precede the rest by a few days, or even hours. All that we desired was just once to slake our raging thirst and moderate our gnawing hunger.

How all the names found their way to the bottom of a hat I cannot tell. Very likely Falsten wrote them upon a leaf torn from his memorandum-book. But be that as it may, the eleven names were there, and it was unanimously agreed that the last name drawn should be the victim.

But who would draw the names? There was hesitation for a moment; then, "I will," said a voice behind me. Turning round, I beheld M. Letourneur standing with outstretched hand, and with his long white hair falling over his thin livid face that was almost sublime in its calmness. I divined at once the reason of this voluntary offer; I knew that it was the father's devotion in self-sacrifice that led him to undertake the office.

"As soon as you please," said the boatswain, and handed him the hat.

M. Letourneur proceeded to draw out the folded strips of paper one by one, and after reading out aloud the name upon it, handed it to its owner.

The first name called was that of Burke, who uttered a cry of delight; then followed Flaypole and the boatswain.

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What his name really was I never could exactly learn. Then came Falsten, Curtis, Sandon. More than half had now been called, and my name had not yet been drawn. I calculated my remaining chance; it was still four to one in my favour.

M. Letourneur continued his painful task. Since Burke's first exclamation of joy not a sound had escaped our lips, but all were listening in breathless silence. The seventh name was Miss Herbey's, but the young girl heard it without a start. Then came mine, yes, mine! and the ninth was that of Letourneur.

"Which one?" asked the boatswain.

"André," said M. Letourneur.

With one cry André fell back senseless. Only two names now remained in the hat, those of Dowlas and of M. Letourneur himself.

"Go on," almost roared the carpenter, surveying his partner in peril as though he could devour him. M. Letourneur almost had a smile upon his lips, as he drew forth the last paper but one, and with a firm, unfaltering voice, marvellous for his age, unfolded it slowly, and read the name of Dowlas. The carpenter gave a yell of relief as he heard the word.

M. Letourneur took the last bit of paper from the hat, and without looking at it, tore it to pieces. But, unperceived by all but myself, one little fragment flew into a

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corner of the raft. I crawled towards it and picked it up. On one side of it was written Andr—; the rest of the word was torn away. M. Letourneur saw what I had done, and rushing towards me, snatched the paper from my hands, and flung it into the sea.

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CHAPTER LIV.

January 26th.—I understood it all; the devoted father having nothing more to give, had given his life for his son.

M. Letourneur was no longer a human being in the eyes of the famished creatures who were now yearning to see him sacrificed to their cravings. At the very sight of the victim thus provided, all the tortures of hunger returned with redoubled violence. With lips distended, and teeth displayed, they waited like a herd of carnivora until they could attack their prey with brutal voracity; it seemed almost doubtful whether they would not fall upon him while he was still alive. It seemed impossible that any appeal to their humanity could, at such a moment, have any weight; nevertheless, the appeal was made, and, incredible as it may seem, prevailed.

Just as the boatswain was about to act the part of butcher, and Dowlas stood, hatchet in hand, ready to

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complete the barbarous work, Miss Herbey advanced, or rather crawled, towards them.

"My friends," she pleaded, "will you not wait just one more day? If no land or ship is in sight to-morrow, then I suppose our poor companion must become your victim. But allow him one more day; in the name of mercy I entreat, I implore you."

My heart bounded as she made her pitiful appeal. It seemed to me as though the noble girl had spoken with an inspiration on her lips, and I fancied that, perhaps, in supernatural vision she had viewed the coast or the ship of which she spoke; and one more day was not much to us who had already suffered so long, and endured so much.

Curtis and Falsten agreed with me, and we all united to support Miss Herbey's merciful petition. The sailors did not utter a murmur, and the boatswain in a smothered voice said,—

"Very well, we will wait till daybreak to-morrow," and threw down his hatchet.

To-morrow, then, unless land or a sail appear, the horrible sacrifice will be accomplished. Stifling their sufferings by a strenuous effort, all returned to their places. The sailors crouched beneath the sails, caring nothing about scanning the ocean. Food was in store for them to-morrow, and that was enough for them.

As soon as André Letourneur came to his senses, his first

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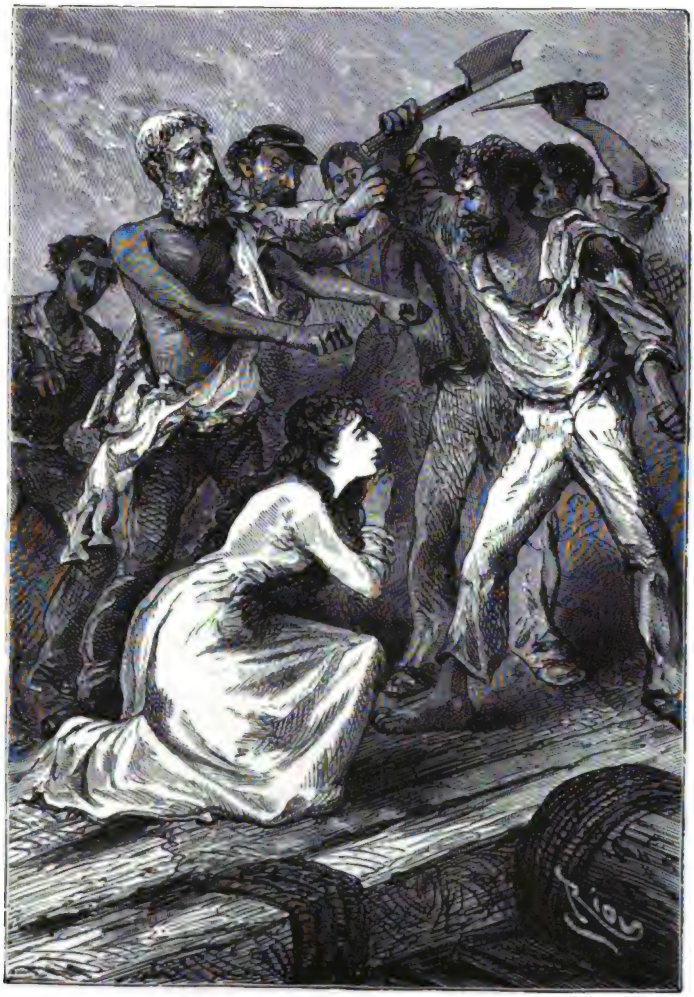

"WILL YOU NOT WAIT JUST ONE MORE DAY?"

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thought was for his father, and I saw him count the passengers on the raft. He looked puzzled; when he lost consciousness there had been only two names left in the hat, those of his father and the carpenter; and yet M. Letourneur and Dowlas were both there still. Miss Herbey went up to him and told him quietly that the drawing of the lots had not yet been finished. André asked no further question, but took his father's hand. M. Letourneur's countenance was calm and serene; he seemed to be conscious of nothing except that the life of his son was spared, and as the two sat conversing in an undertone at the back of the raft, their whole existence seemed bound up in each other.

Meantime, I could not disabuse my mind of the impression caused by Miss Herbey's intervention. Something told me that help was near at hand, and that we were approaching the termination of our suspense and misery; the chimeras that were floating through my brain resolved themselves into realities, so that nothing appeared to me more certain than that either land or sail, be they miles away, would be discovered somewhere to leeward.

I imparted my convictions to M. Letourneur and his son. André was as sanguine as myself; poor boy! he little thinks what a loss there is in store for him to-morrow. His father listened gravely to all we said, and whatever he might think in his own mind, he did not give us any

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discouragement; Heaven, he said, he was sure would still spare the survivors of the "Chancellor," and then he lavished on his son caresses which he deemed to be his last.

Some time afterwards, when I was alone with him, M. Letourneur whispered in my ear,—

"Mr. Kazallon, I commend my boy to your care, and mark you, he must never know—"

His voice was choked with tears, and he could not finish his sentence.

But I was full of hope, and, without a moment's intermission, I kept my eyes fixed upon the unbroken horizon. Curtis, Miss Herbey, Falsten, and even the boatswain, were also eagerly scanning the broad expanse of sea.

Night has come on; but I have still a profound conviction that through the darkness some ship will approach, and that at daybreak our raft will be observed.

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CHAPTER LV.

January 27th.—I did not close my eyes all night, and was keenly alive to the faintest sounds, and every ripple of the water, and every murmur of the waves, broke distinctly on my ear. One thing I noticed and accepted as a happy omen; not a single shark now lingered round the raft. The waning moon rose at a quarter to one, and through the feeble glimmer which she cast across the ocean, many and many a time I fancied I caught sight of the longed-for sail, lying only a few cables'-lengths away.

But when morning came, the sun rose once again upon a desert ocean, and my hopes began to fade. Neither ship nor shore had appeared, and as the shocking hour of execution drew near, my dreams of deliverance melted away; I shuddered in my very soul as I was brought face to face with the stern reality. I dared not look upon the victim, and whenever his eyes, so full of calmness and resignation, met my own, I turned away my head. I felt

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choked with horror, and my brain reeled as though I were intoxicated.

It was now six o'clock, and all hope had vanished from my breast; my heart beat rapidly, and a cold sweat of agony broke out all over me. Curtis and the boatswain stood by the mast attentively scanning the horizon. The boatswain's countenance was terrible to look upon; one could see that although he would not forestall the hour, he was determined not to wait a moment after it arrived. As for the captain, it was impossible to tell what really passed within his mind; his face was livid, and his whole existence seemed concentrated in the exercise of his power of vision. The sailors were crawling about the platform, with their eyes gleaming, like wild beasts ready to pounce upon their devoted prey.

I could no longer keep my place, and glided along to the front of the raft. The boatswain was still standing intent on his watch, but all of a sudden, in a voice that made me start, he shouted,—

"Now then, time's up!" and followed by Dowlas, Burke, Flaypole, and Sandon, ran to the back of the raft. As Dowlas seized the hatchet convulsively, Miss Herbey could not suppress a cry of terror. André started to his feet.

"What are you going to do to my father?" he asked in accents choked with emotion.

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"My boy," said M. Letourneur, "the lot has fallen upon me, and I must die!"

"Never!" shrieked André, throwing his arms about his father. "They shall kill me first. It was I who threw Hobart's body into the sea, and it is I who ought to die!"

But the words of the unhappy youth had no other effect than to increase the fury of the men who were so staunchly bent upon their bloody purpose.

"Come, come, no more fuss," said Dowlas, as he tore the young man away from his father's embrace.

André fell upon his back, in which position two of the sailors held him down so tightly that he could not move, whilst Burke and Sandon carried off their victim to the front.

All this had taken place much more rapidly than I have been able to describe it. I was transfixed with horror, and much as I wished to throw myself between M. Letourneur and his executioners, I seemed to be rooted to the spot where I was standing.

Meantime the sailors had been taking off some of M. Letourneur's clothes, and his neck and shoulders were already bare.

"Stop a moment!" he said in a tone in which was the ring of indomitable courage. "Stop! I dont want to deprive you of your ration; but I suppose you will not require to eat the whole of me to-day."

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The sailors, taken aback by his suggestion, stared at him with amazement.

"There are ten of you," he went on. "My two arms will give you each a meal; cut them off for to-day, and to-morrow you shall have the rest of me."

"Agreed!" cried Dowlas; and as M. Letourneur held out his bare arms, quick as lightning the carpenter raised his hatchet.

Curtis and I could bear this scene no longer; whilst we were alive to prevent it, this butchery should not be permitted, and we rushed forwards simultaneously to snatch the victim from his murderers. A furious struggle ensued, and in the midst of the *mêlée*, I was seized by one of the sailors, and hurled violently into the sea.

Closing my lips, I tried to die of suffocation in the water; but in spite of myself, my mouth opened, and a few drops trickled down my throat.

Merciful Heaven! the water was fresh!

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"FRESH WATER!"

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CHAPTER LVI.

January 27th continued.—A change came over me as if by miracle. No longer had I any wish to die, and already Curtis, who had heard my cries, was throwing me a rope. I seized it eagerly, and was hauled up on to the raft.

"Fresh water!" were the first words I uttered.

"Fresh water?" cried Curtis, "why then, my friends, we are not far from land!"

It was not too late; the blow had not been struck, and so the victim had not yet fallen. Curtis and André (who had regained his liberty) had fought with the cannibals, and it was just as they were yielding to overpowering numbers that my voice had made itself heard.

The struggle came to an end. As soon as the words "Fresh water" had escaped my lips, I leaned over the side of the raft and swallowed the life-giving liquid in greedy draughts. Miss Herbey was the first to follow my example, but soon Curtis, Falsten, and all the rest were on

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their knees and drinking eagerly. The rough sailors seemed as if by a magic touch transformed back from ravenous beasts to human beings, and I saw several of them raise their hands to heaven in silent gratitude. André and his father were the last to drink.

"But where are we?" I asked at length.

"The land is there," said Curtis pointing towards the west.

We all stared at the captain as though he were mocking us; no land was in sight, and the raft, just as ever, was the centre of a watery waste. Yet our senses had not deceived us: the water we had been drinking was perfectly fresh.

"Yes," repeated the captain, "land is certainly there, not more than twenty miles to leeward."

"What land?" inquired the boatswain.

"South America," answered Curtis, "and near the Amazon; no other river has a current strong enough to freshen the ocean twenty miles from shore!"

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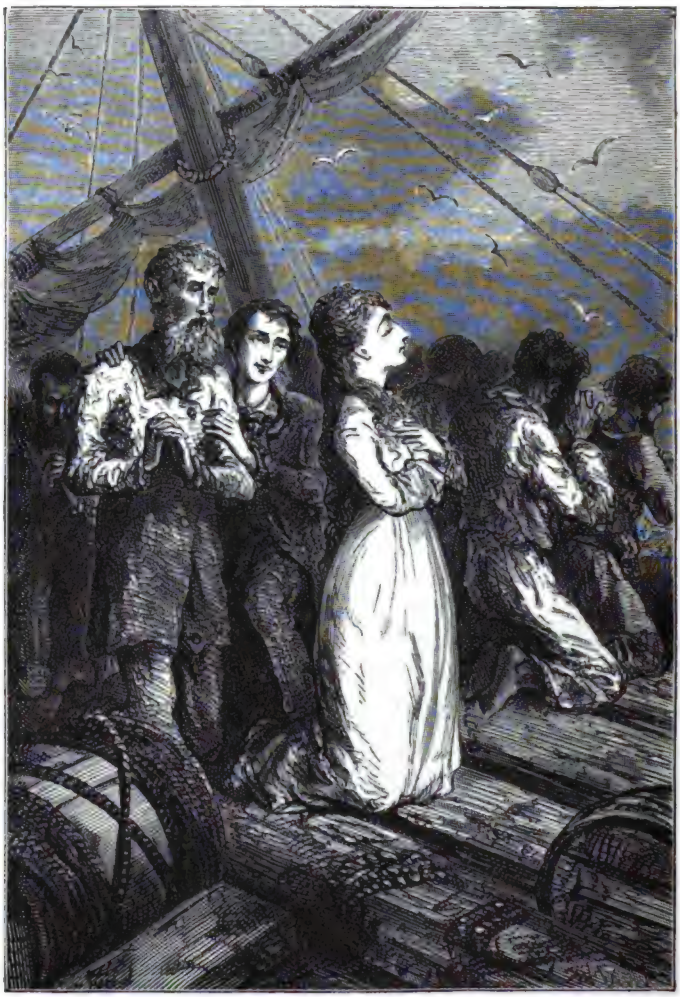

MISS HERBEY'S VOICE WAS HEARD POURING OUT FERVENT PRAISE TO HEAVEN.

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CHAPTER LVII.

January 27th continued.—Curtis, no doubt, was right. The discharge from the mouth of the Amazon is enormously large, but we had probably drifted into the only spot in the Atlantic where we could find fresh water so far from land. Yet land, undoubtedly, was there, and the breeze was carrying us onwards slowly but surely to our deliverance.

Miss Herbey's voice was heard pouring out fervent praise to Heaven, and we were all glad to unite our thanksgivings with hers. Then the whole of us (with the exception of André and his father, who remained by themselves together at the stern) clustered in a group, and kept our expectant gaze upon the horizon.

We had not long to wait. Before an hour had passed Curtis leaped in ecstasy and raised the joyous shout of "Land ahoy!"

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* * * * * *

My journal has come to a close.

I have only to relate, as briefly as possible, the circumstances that finally brought us to our destination.

A few hours after we first sighted land the raft was off Cape Magoari, on the Island of Marajo, and was observed by some fishermen, who, with kind-hearted alacrity, picked us up, and tended us most carefully. They conveyed us to Para, where we became the objects of unbounded sympathy.

The raft was brought to land in lat. 0° 12′ N., so that since we abandoned the "Chancellor" we had drifted at least fifteen degrees to the south-west. Except for the influence of the Gulf Stream we must have been carried far, far to the south, and in that case we should never have reached the mouth of the Amazon, and must inevitably have been lost.

Of the thirty-two souls—nine passengers, and twenty-three seamen—who left Charleston on board the ship, only five passengers and six seamen remain. Eleven of us alone survive.

An official account of our rescue was drawn up by the Brazilian authorities. Those who signed were Miss Herbey, J. R. Kazallon, M. Letourneur, André Letourneur,

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Mr. Falsten, the boatswain, Dowlas, Burke, Flaypole, Sandon, and last, though not least,

"Robert Curtis, captain."

At Para we soon found facilities for continuing our homeward route. A vessel took us to Cayenne, where we secured a passage on board one of the steamers of the French Transatlantic Aspinwall line, the "Ville de St. Nazaire," which conveyed us to Europe.

After all the dangers and privations which we have undergone together, it is scarcely necessary to say that there has arisen between the surviving passengers of the "Chancellor" a bond of friendship too indissoluble, I believe, for either time or circumstance to destroy; Curtis must ever remain the honoured and valued friend of those whose welfare he consulted so faithfully in their misfortunes; his conduct was beyond all praise.

When we were fairly on our homeward way, Miss Herbey by chance intimated to us her intention of retiring from the world and devoting the remainder of her life to the care of the sick and suffering.

"Then why not come and look after my son?" said M. Letourneur, adding, "he is an invalid, and he requires, as he deserves, the best of nursing."

Miss Herbey, after some deliberation, consented to become a member of their family, and finds in M. Letour-

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neur a father, and in André a brother. A brother, I say; but may we not hope that she may be united by a dearer and a closer tie, and that the noble-hearted girl may experience the happiness that so richly she deserves?

END OF THE CHANCELLOR.

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MARTIN PAZ.

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MARTIN PAZ.[1]

CHAPTER I.

THE sun had just sunk behind the snowy peaks of the Cordilleras, and, although the beautiful Peruvian sky was being covered by the veil of night, the atmosphere was clear and refreshing in its balmy coolness. It was just the hour when a European might enjoy the climate, and with open verandah luxuriate in the grateful breeze.

The stars were beginning to ascend from the horizon, and the promenaders betook themselves to the streets of Lima, where, protected merely by their light capes, they

[1] "MARTIN PAZ" is one of M. Verne's earliest works. Previous to the publication of "*Cinq Semaines en Ballon*" the author had made his *début* in a volume (published under the general title of "*Docteur Ox*") containing "*Maître Zacharias*," "*Un Hivernage dans les Glaces*," "*Un Drame dans les Airs*," and "*Martin Paz*." Jules Verne had not then adopted the style which has since rendered his name famous; but it is interesting to note how these first essays already indicated the germs of that genius which has made his works a *spécialité* in our literature. For this reason they merit being preserved.—J. HETZEL.

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discussed the most trivial topics with the most profound gravity. The general direction of the throng was towards the grand square, the Plaza Mayor, the forum of the ancient "City of the Kings."

The same cool atmosphere which tempted the population to an evening stroll had the effect of bringing out the various hawkers, who threaded their way amidst the crowd, shouting aloud the praises of their different wares. The women, wearing mantles which effectually concealed their faces, glided, as it were, between the groups of smokers. A few ladies there were in evening dress, with their *coiffure* composed of their own luxuriant hair, gracefully adorned with natural flowers; but these were lounging back in their wide barouches. The Indians were seen making their sullen way without once lifting their eyes, and indicating neither by gesture nor by word the rancourous envy that was gnawing at their spirit, a contrast altogether with the half-breeds, who, repudiated as themselves, protested more openly against their civil wrongs.

As for the Spaniards, those haughty descendants of Pizarro, they held their heads aloft as though they were still entitled to the homage of the days of old, when their ancestors had founded the city of the kings. They entertained supreme contempt alike for the Indians whom they had conquered, and for the half-breeds who had sprung from their own connexion with the people of the New

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World. Like every other subjugated race, the Indians chafed at their condition, and regarded with common antipathy not only the conquerors who had overturned the ancient empire of the Incas, but also the half-breeds, that upstart race, which was as arrogant as it was vulgar.

With regard to these half-breeds, it may be asserted that they were Spaniards as far as their scorn of the Indians could make them so, while they were thorough Indians in the detestation in which they held the Spaniards. The two sentiments were about equally developed, and united their influence in embittering their life.

It was a party of these young half-breeds that was now seen clustering near the fine fountain that adorns the centre of the Plaza Mayor. Each of them was wearing a "poncho," which consisted simply of an oblong piece of cotton, with an aperture in the middle to admit the head of the wearer, and nearly all of them were arrayed in loose trousers, gay with stripes of a thousand colours; on their heads they had broad-brimmed hats made of straw from Guayaquil. Their conversation was loud, and they gesticulated violently as they talked.

"You are right, André," said a little man named Millaflores, speaking in a most obsequious tone.

This Millaflores was a hanger-on, a sort of parasite of André Certa, a young half-breed, and the son of a wealthy merchant who had been killed in one of the late insurrec-

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tions made by the conspirator Lafuenta. Inheriting an ample fortune, André had sought by a lavish prodigality to surround himself with a bevy of friends from whom he exacted nothing more than the most servile deference in exchange for the outlay of his gold.

"And what good, I should like to know," said André, raising his voice higher and higher as he spoke, "what good ever comes of these changes of government, and these everlasting *pronunciamentos* that are constantly agitating Peru. As long as there is no equality established, it matters little whether it be Gambarra or Santa Cruz that rules us."

"Well said! well said, indeed!" shrieked out the little Millaflores, who, in spite of the passing of a law for universal equality, could never have been an equal for any man of spirit.

"Here am I," continued André Certa, "the son of a merchant, and how is it that I am not allowed a carriage drawn by anything better than mules! Whose ships were they but mine that brought prosperity and affluence into the land? And isn't an aristocracy of wealth far more than a match for all the empty titles of the grandees of Spain?"

"Disgraceful!" chimed in the voice of one of the young half-breeds; "utterly disgraceful! Just look there! there goes Don Fernando! see him how he drives along in his chariot drawn by horses! Don Fernando d'Aguillo! he

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can scarcely afford to buy a dinner for his coachman, and yet look at the air with which he lords it about the Plaza! Look, look! there's another of them! the Marquis Don Vegal!"

A splendid carriage at that moment turned into the Plaza, and proved in truth to belong to the Marquis Don Vegal, Chevalier of Alcantara, of Malta, and of Charles III. The nobleman, however, had come out only to relieve the tedium of the evening, and with no thought of ostentation or display. As he sat with his head bent down with anxious care, he paid no regard to the envious sneers with which the groups of half-breeds greeted him while his carriage and four dashed through the crowd.

"I hate that man," growled André Certa.

"Ah! you will not need to hate him long," replied one of the young men.

"Perhaps not," said André. "There is no doubt that these lordlings have seen nearly the last of their luxuries, and have pretty well exhausted all their jewels and family plate."

"Yes, indeed; and no one knows that better than yourself, familiar as you are with the affairs of old Samuel the Jew."

"True; the old Jew's ledger shows plenty of credit and lots of debt, and his strong box is full to the hasp with the *débris* of the fine fortunes of the old aristocrats. But the

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day isn't far off, and a jolly day it will be, when these Spaniards will all be beggars, like their own Cæsar de Bozan."

"Capital, André," put in Millaflores; "and then you will mount upon your own millions, and double them besides. But when do you mean to marry old Samuel's daughter? Sarah is a true child of Lima, a Peruvian to the very tips of her fingers; nothing of the Jewess about her except her name."

"Oh, within a month," said André. "In another month there will not be a fortune in the land that will be able to compete with mine."

"But why," was the inquiry of one of the admiring group, "why don't you marry the daughter of some Spaniard who can boast a noble lineage?"

"Because I despise the race as much as I hate it," replied André; but he did not think it necessary to confess that his acquaintanceship had been ignominiously rejected in every aristocratic circle to which he had endeavoured to get an introduction.

At this instant André was unceremoniously jostled by a tall man with grisly hair, whose thick-set limbs indicated more than an ordinary amount of physical strength.

The man was an Indian, a native of the mountains; he wore a dark-brown vest, over a shirt of the coarsest serge, that, opening at the neck, revealed the shaggiest of bosoms;

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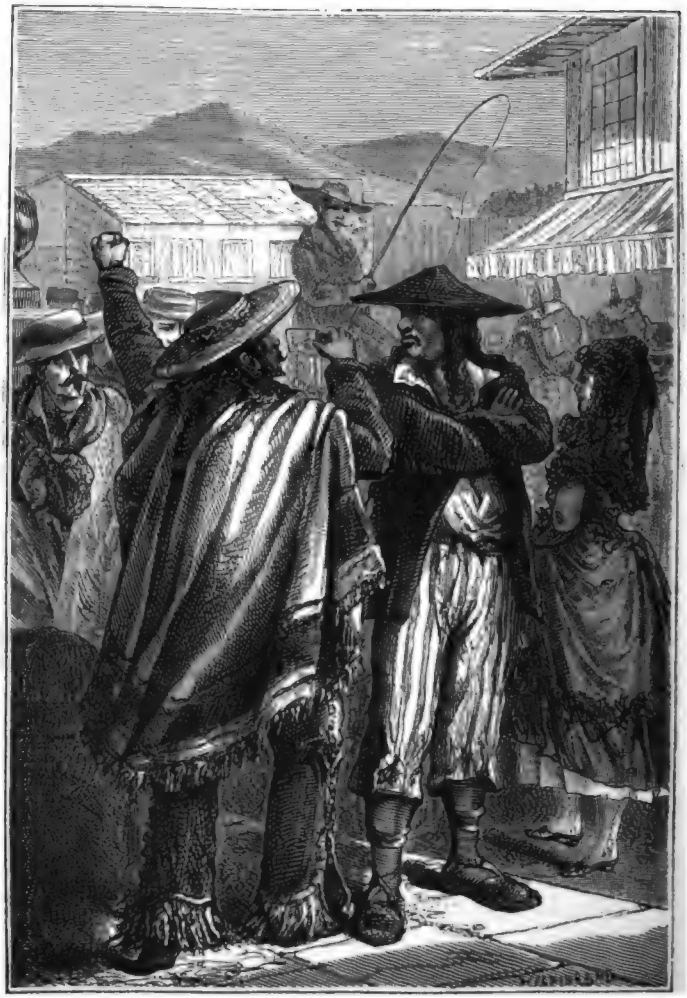

"YOU VILE INDIAN!"

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his short linen trousers were gaudy with green stripes, and his stone-coloured stockings were fastened at the knee with crimson garters, and overlaced with thongs of ox-hide to bind on his sandals; a pair of glittering ear-rings hung far below the border of his hat.

After jostling André, the man stood still and stared at him.

"You vile Indian!" exclaimed the assaulted half-breed, as he raised his hand to strike him.

His companions held him back, and Millaflores cried, "André, André! mind what you are about!"

"What does the wretched slave mean by daring to jostle me?" exclaimed André furiously.

"Never mind, he's only an idiot; it is Sambo!"

The Indian continued steadily staring at the man whom he had intentionally affronted. André, beside himself with rage, laid his hand upon the dagger which he carried in his belt, and was upon the point of attacking his aggressor, when a shrill cry, like the note of the Peruvian linnet, re-echoed above the tumult of the crowd, and in a moment Sambo had disappeared.

"Miserable coward!" ejaculated the furious André.

Millaflores gently begged him to control his passion, and said, "Let us leave the Plaza; the Lima girls here are far too haughty."

The group of young men began to retire towards the

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lower end of the promenade. Night had come on, and as they glided about with their identity completely disguised by their mantles, the women of Lima truly deserved their name of the "tapadas,"—the "concealed."

The Plaza Mayor was still the scene of bustling animation. The noise and tumult seemed ever to be increasing. The horse-guards, sentinelled at the central gateway of the Viceroy's palace, had as much as they could do to retain their places undisturbed by the thronging of the busy crowd. Industry of every sort appeared to have found a general *rendezvous*, and the whole place was well-nigh given up to the exhibition of articles for sale. The lower story of the palace, and the very basement of the cathedral had been converted into shops, and the entire locality was thus transformed into a vast bazaar for all the varied products of the tropics.

Louder and louder waxed the noise; when all at once the bell from the cathedral tower tolled out the Angelus, and the tumult was completely hushed. The clamour of business was replaced by the whisperings of prayer. The ladies paused upon the promenade, and began to tell their beads.

During the interval of the suspended traffic, and while the mass of the people was still in the attitude of devotion, a young girl, accompanied by an old duenna, was trying to make her way through the thickest of the crowd. Angry

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A TALL YOUNG INDIAN STANDING WITH FOLDED ARMS.

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remonstrances met the ears of both as their movements interrupted the prayers of those they passed. The girl wanted to stand and wait, but the undaunted duenna dragged her resolutely on.

The remonstrances continued. First some one would say, "What are these daughters of the devil doing?" and then another would ask, "Who is this cursed ballet-girl?" and a third would cry out, "Another Carcaman!"[2] till at last, overwhelmed by confusion, the girl refused to advance a step.

At that instant a muleteer was proceeding to take her by the shoulders and force her on to her knees; but he had scarcely raised his hand for the purpose, when he was seized by a strong arm from behind, and felled to the ground. The incident, though it was quick as lightning, caused some confusion for a moment.

"Make your escape, young lady," said a voice, gently and respectfully, close to the girl's ear.

Pale with terror she cast a glance behind her, and saw a tall young Indian standing with folded arms and looking defiantly at the muleteer before him.

"Alas, alas!" cried the duenna, "we have got into trouble," and hurried the girl away.

Bruised by his fall the muleteer rose to his feet, but not

[2] Carcaman: an offensive epithet applied in Peru to Europeans in general.

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deeming it prudent to demand satisfaction from an opponent of such resolute bearing as the young Indian, he retired towards his mules, muttering angry but useless threats as he went.

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CHAPTER II.

THE town of Lima nestles as it were in the valley of the Rimac, at about nine miles from the mouth of the river. From its northern and eastern outskirts rise the eminences which form the first outlying spurs of the great chain of the Andes, the vale of Lungiano, enclosed by the mountains of San Cristoral and the Amancas, terminating at its very suburbs. The town is confined to one side of the river, the other bank being built over by the suburb of San Lazaro, and connected with the main town by a handsome bridge of five arches. The piers of the bridge above stream are triangular, and their vertices divide the current, while those on the lower side are surmounted by a promenade, which abounds in seats, upon which the evening loungers may rest and enjoy the prospect of a fine cascade.

From east to west Lima is about two miles long, but not more than a mile and a quarter wide from the bridge

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to the walls. These walls, which are about twelve feet high, and ten feet thick at their base, are constructed of a peculiar kind of bricks, known as "adobes," dried in the sun, and composed of clay and a large proportion of chopped straw, and reputed to be well adapted for resisting the shocks of the ever-recurring earthquakes. The ramparts have seven gates and three posterns, and at their south-east angle are surmounted by the citadel of S. Catherino.

Such is the ancient "City of the Kings," founded in 1534 by Pizarro on the feast of the Epiphany. It has never ceased to be the scene of revolution. Formerly it was the chief emporium of America in the whole Pacific, to which it was opened by the port of Callao. This port was constructed in 1779 by the following singular device. The hulk of an old worn-out ship of the largest dimensions was first filled with stones and sand and every kind of rubbish, and then grounded on the shore. A number of mangrove piles brought over from Guayaquil, and which do not decay in water, were driven into the foundation that had been thus artificially made, and formed a basement on which was erected a strong and substantial mole.

The climate, being more pleasant than that of either Cartagena or Bahia on the opposite coast of America, makes Lima one of the most agreeable places of residence in the New World. The wind never deviates from one of two

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directions; either it blows from the south-west, and brings with it the refreshing influence which it has gained in traversing the Pacific, or it comes from the south-east, invigorating and cheering with the coolness which it has gathered from the snowy summits of the Cordilleras.

The nights, too, at Lima are delightful as elsewhere in the tropics; the dew which rises is a bountiful source of nutriment to a soil that is ever exposed to the rays of a cloudless sun. When evening sets in, the inhabitants take advantage of the welcome shade to prolong their hospitable entertainments, and it is not long before the streets are deserted, and the public restaurants have seen their latest visitor.

On the evening in question, the girl, still attended by her duenna, arrived from the great square at the bridge of the Rimac without further misadventure. Her excitement was still intense, and made her start at every sound which brought to her imagination either the ringing of the muleteer's bells, or the whistle of an Indian.

The girl was Sarah, the daughter of Samuel the Jew, and she was now about to enter the house of her father. She was dressed in a dark-coloured skirt plaited round the bottom in such close folds as to oblige her to take the very shortest steps, giving her that graceful movement which is so generally characteristic of the young women of Lima. The skirt was trimmed with lace and flowers, and was

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partially concealed by a silk mantle, the hood of which enveloped her head; stockings of fine texture, and pretty little satin slippers were visible below her becoming dress; bracelets of considerable value encircled her wrists, and her whole appearance afforded a charming illustration of what the Spaniards express so pointedly by their term "donayre."

Millaflores had only declared the truth when he had said that Sarah had nothing Jewish about her but her name; she was undeniably a type of the señoras whose beauty has commanded such universal homage.

The old duenna was a Jewess, with avarice and cupidity stamped indelibly upon her features; she was a devoted servant to Samuel, who knew what she was worth, and remunerated her accordingly.

Just at the moment that they entered the suburb of San Lazaro, a man, dressed as a monk, with his cowl over his head, passed them with a keen and scrutinizing look of inquiry. He was very tall, and had one of those commanding figures which seem at once to indicate repose and benevolence. It was Father Joachim di Camarones. As he passed the girl he gave her a kindly smile of recognition; she glanced hastily at her companion, and merely acknowledged his greeting by a gentle movement of her hand.

"Has it come to this?" said the old woman, in a tone of annoyance, "isn't it enough to be insulted by these Christian dogs, and here you must be bowing and smiling

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to one of their priests! I suppose some day we shall see you take up a rosary, and go off to their fine services in church."

It may be noticed that the ritual of the church in Lima was performed with the most elaborate care.

The girl coloured as she replied, "You are indulging in some strange conjectures."

"Strange! not more strange, I think, than your behaviour. What would my master say if he knew all that has passed this evening?"

"It's no fault of mine, I should suppose," rejoined the girl, "if a brutal muleteer chooses to insult me in the street."

"I know very well what I mean," grumbled the old woman; "I wasn't alluding to any muleteer."

"Then," inquired Sarah, "do you blame that young Indian for taking my part against the crowd?"

"Ah! ah! but it isn't the first time the young fellow has crossed your path."

Fortunately for her, the maiden's face was covered by her mantilla, otherwise the evening shades would not have been deep enough to conceal the girl's flush of excitement from the inquisitive eye of the old domestic.

"But never mind the Indian now," continued the old crone; "I will keep my eye on that business. What troubles me most now is that rather than interrupt those

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Christians at their prayers, you should actually stand still and wait while they knelt, and I really believe you were going to kneel too. Ah! señora, if your father were to know that I could allow you to insult your faith like that, he would not be long in sending me adrift."

The girl, however, heard nothing of the reproof. The very mention of the Indian had turned her thoughts into a sweeter channel. She recalled what was to her a providential interference on her behalf, and could not divest herself of a belief that her deliverer was still not far behind, following in the shade. There was a certain fearlessness in her character that became her marvellously. Proud she was with the pride of a Spaniard, and if she felt her interest awakened by the young Indian, it was chiefly because he, too, was proud, and had not sought a glance of her eye as an acknowledgment for his protection.

In truth, she was not far wrong in her surmise that the Indian was not out of sight. After his interference in her defence, he had resolved to make her retreat entirely secure; and accordingly, when the observers were dispersed, he proceeded to follow her without being perceived.

A well-built man was Martin Paz, his figure being nobly set off by the costume that he wore as an Indian of the mountains. Below the wide brim of his straw hat clustered massive locks of thick black hair which harmonized perfectly with his dark complexion. His eyes were at once

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SHE WAS NOT FAR WRONG IN HER SURMISE THAT THE INDIAN WAS NOT OUT OF SIGHT.

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brilliant and soft, and a well-formed nose rose above lips so small as to be quite rare in any of his race. He was of the lineage of the courageous Manco-Capac, and in his veins coursed the ardent blood that was capable of great achievements.

Martin Paz was attired in a poncho of many hues; from his girdle was suspended one of those Malay daggers which are ever formidable in a practised hand, and seem to be welded to the arm that wields them. Had he been in North America, by the wild borders of Lake Ontario, he would, to a certainty, have been a chief of those wandering tribes who fought so heroically against their English foes.

Martin was quite aware not only that Sarah was the daughter of the wealthy Jew, but also, that she was betrothed to the rich half-breed, André Certa; he knew that her birth, her social position, and her fortune, alike prohibited her from ever having any relations with himself; but overlooking all impossibilities, he gave free licence to his infatuation.

Plunged in his own reflections, he was hastening on his way, when he was suddenly accosted by two other Indians.

"Martin Paz," said one of them, "don't you intend to go to-night and meet our brothers in the mountains?"

"I shall be there," was Martin's curt reply.

"The schooner 'Annunciation,'" went on the other, "has been seen off the heights of Callao, and after tacking for a

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little while has disappeared behind the point. No doubt she will land at the mouth of the Rimac, and our boats should be there to disembark her cargo. Come, you must!"

Martin Paz said he knew what he ought to do, and would do it.

"We speak to you here in Sambo's name."

"Yes," said Martin, "and I answer you in my own."

"How shall we account for your being here in San Lazaro at this extraordinary hour of the night?"

"I go where I please," was the only answer.

"In front of the Jew's house, too!"

"Such of my brethren as are offended at it may meet me, and tell me of it this very night upon the hills."

The eyes of the three men flashed, but no more was said. The two retreated towards the bank of the Rimac, and the sound of their footsteps was soon lost in the distance.

Martin Paz had come quite alone to the residence of the Jew. Like all the houses in Lima it was only two storys high. The basement was built of bricks, and upon this was raised another story composed of plaited canes, plastered over and painted to match the walls below. This is a contrivance which is best adapted to resist the convulsions of the frequent earthquakes. The roof was flat, and being covered with flowers, made a fragrant and an agreeable resort.

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A broad gateway between two lodges gave access to a courtyard within, but according to the custom of the place, those lodges had no windows opening into the road.

The church clock had struck eleven, and there was the deepest silence all around.

And why is it that the Indian lingers here before the walls? Only because a dim shadow has been seen moving amidst those flowers, of which night only hides the form, without depriving them of their delightful odours.

With an involuntary impulse Martin lifts his hands in ardent admiration. The dim figure starts and shrinks away as if in terror. Martin Paz withdraws his gaze from the roof to find himself face to face with André Certa.

"And for how long have the Indians been accustomed to pass their nights in this fashion?" asked André, hot with rage.

"Ever since Indians have trodden the soil of their ancestors," sternly answered Martin Paz, without moving an inch. André advanced towards him.

"Wretch!" he exclaimed, "will you not leave the place?"

"No!" cried Martin Paz, and in an instant daggers flashed in the right hands of both. They were of equal height, and seemed of equal strength. Quickly had André raised his arm, but still more quickly had it dropped; his poignard had met that of his antagonist, and he fell to the ground wounded in the shoulder.

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"Help, help!" he shouted.

The gate of the Jew's house was quickly opened. Some half-breeds ran out hastily from an adjacent building; a part of them set out in pursuit of the Indian, who had at once made off, while the others attended to the wounded man.

"Who is he?" asked a bystander. "If he is a sailor, he had better be carried off to the Hospital of St. Esprit; if he is an Indian, let him be taken to St. Anne's."

But at this point an old man approached, and having given a glance at the wounded André, said,—

"Take him into my house!" and then muttered to himself, "What strange piece of business is this?"

It was Samuel the Jew, who had thus recognized in the wounded man the intended husband of his daughter.

Meanwhile Martin Paz, favoured by the darkness of the night and by his own fleetness, succeeded in escaping the hot pursuit of those who followed him. He was flying for his life. Could he only reach the open country, he would be safe; but the gates of the town, which were closed every night at eleven, would not be opened until four.

He reached the bridge, which he had crossed not long before. The half-breeds, with some soldiers who had joined them, pressed him closely from behind; an armed guard made its appearance right in front. Martin, unable either to advance or to retreat, bounded over the parapet,

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and leaped into the rapid stream that was dashing along its rocky bed. The soldiers rushed to the bank below the bridge to catch the fugitive as he reached the shore; but their effort was in vain. Martin Paz was nowhere to be seen.

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CHAPTER III.

ONCE safely lodged in the house of Samuel, and placed upon a couch that was quickly prepared for him, André Certa soon recovered his consciousness, and grasped the hand of the Jew. The surgeon who had been summoned was soon in attendance, and pronounced the wound to be unimportant, the shoulder having received the blow in such a way that the poignard had merely made a flesh wound; and there was no doubt that in a few days André would be convalescent.

When André found himself alone with Samuel he said to him,—

"I think you ought to block up the doorway that leads up to the terrace on the roof."

"Why?" rejoined the Jew. "What is there to be afraid of?"

"I don't think," continued André, "that it is right for Sarah to expose herself to the gaze of those Indians. It

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was from no burglar, it was simply from a rival that I received the cut that might have caused me serious injury: it was only by a miracle that I escaped."

"Ah! by the holy Bible!" shrieked the Jew, "you must be mistaken. My daughter will make you an accomplished wife, and I have always taken care that she shall do nothing that will damage your reputation."

André Certa lifted himself on to his elbow, and said significantly, "Are you not rather forgetting that I am to pay for Sarah's hand the price of no less than a hundred thousand piastres?"

"By no means," said the Jew with a greedy grin, "and I am quite ready to give you a receipt when I get the hard cash." And as he spoke he took from his portfolio a paper, of which André took no notice.

"There will be no bargain between us, Master Samuel, until Sarah becomes my wife; and that she won't be, if there is to be any difficulty about a rival. You know my object; I want to be a match for those haughty aristocrats, who now treat me with such vile contempt."

"And that is in your reach, André. Once married you will find the haughtiest Spaniards coming to your receptions."

"Where has your daughter been this evening?" asked André.

"She has been to the synagogue with old Ammon, her companion."

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"Why do you make your daughter attend those services?" said André. "What good can they be to her?"

"I am a Jew," replied the father, "and Sarah would not be my daughter if she did not fulfil the offices of our religion."

A villainous rascal was Samuel the Jew. Trading in commodities of any kind, however questionable, he was worthy to be a direct descendant of the Iscariot who betrayed his Master for thirty silver shekels. He had settled in Lima some ten years previously. Equally to please his taste and to serve his interests he had chosen a residence on the outskirts of the suburb of San Lazaro, where he applied himself to the most unscrupulous practices. Gradually his home assumed more and more of luxury, till at length he had a mansion sumptuous in its furniture, a numerous retinue of servants, and such splendid equipages as only belonged to men of unbounded affluence.

When Samuel first took up his abode in Lima his daughter was eight years of age. Already graceful and captivating in her manner, she was the very idol of the Jew. Her beauty increased with her age, and attracted universal admiration, and before long it was generally understood that André Certa, the rich half-breed, was desperately smitten with her; what would have appeared inexplicable was that the sum of a hundred thousand piastres should be the price of Sarah's hand: but that part

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of the contract was a secret. Besides, it was a part of old Samuel's nature to make a profit out of sentimental emotions just as though they were marketable products. Banker, usurer, broker, and shipowner, he had a faculty for doing business with every one who came in his way. The schooner "Annunciation," which that very night was seeking to land at the mouth of the Rimac, was his property.

Eagerly devoted as he was to the transactions of business, this man, with the persistent bigotry of some of his race, found time to fulfil the religious offices of his creed with the most punctilious regularity, and his daughter had been strictly trained in the same faith; consequently, after André, in the course of their conversation, had let it be seen how much the fact displeased him, the old man sat for a time pensive and silent. André at length broke the silence.

"You must be aware," he said, "that the motive under which I contemplate marrying your daughter will compel her to become a Catholic."

"True," answered Samuel in a mournful tone, "but, by the holy Bible, as sure as Sarah is my daughter, Sarah will be a Jewess still!"

At this moment the door was opened, and the steward of the household entered.

"Has the assassin been arrested?" asked the Jew.

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"Everything induces us to believe him dead," replied the steward.

"Dead!" exclaimed André, with a gesture of delight.

"So 'tis thought; he found himself upon the bridge with us pursuing him from behind, and a guard of soldiers just in front, and in order to escape, he jumped over the parapet and flung himself into the stream."

"But what makes you think that he did not reach one of the banks?" asked Samuel.

"Because the melting of the snow has swollen the stream into a torrent," replied the steward. "Besides, we hurried to each side of the river, but the man was never seen. The sentinels have been left to watch the banks all night."

"Well," said the old man, "if he is drowned, he has only executed just sentence upon himself. But did you recognize who he was?"

"Yes, it was Martin Paz, the Indian of the mountains."

"You mean the man who has now been so long watching my daughter?"

"Of that I know nothing," was the servant's indifferent reply.

The Jew then desired that Ammon, the old duenna, should be sent to him, and the steward retired to convey the order.

"Strange!" exclaimed the old man. "These Indians

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have so many secret conspiracies; it ought to be known how long this fellow has been carrying on his game."

By this time the duenna had entered the room, and stood waiting her master's pleasure.

"Does my daughter know anything of what has occurred to-night?" he inquired.

"I only know," was Ammon's reply, "that when I was roused by the clamour in the house, I hurried to the señora's room, and found her motionless with fright."

"Go on," he said impatiently, "tell me all."

"I pressed her to tell me the cause of her alarm; but she could not be induced to speak, and insisted upon going to bed; she would not allow me to attend her, and I was obliged to leave her to herself."

"This Indian, do you often meet him?"

"I can hardly say often," she replied, "but I must acknowledge that I know him very well by sight about the streets of San Lazaro, and this very evening he came to the señora's assistance in the Plaza Mayor."

"To her assistance! what do you mean?"

After the duenna had detailed the incident, the old Jew muttered wrathfully, "Is it true, then, that Sarah wanted to kneel down amongst those hateful Christians?" And then raising his voice, he threatened that Ammon should quit his service.

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"Oh! forgive me, master, forgive me," was her deprecating cry.

"Out of my sight!" shouted Samuel harshly, and the duenna retreated in abashed confusion.

"There is no time to lose, you see," said André Certa, "it is high time that this marriage of ours should come off. But I want some rest now, and shall be glad to be left alone."

The old man slowly retired; but before going to his own bed he wished to satisfy himself about the condition of his daughter, and accordingly he entered her apartment as gently as he could.

Sarah was sleeping very restlessly on a bed that was hung round with the richest of silk draperies. An elaborate lamp hung from the decorated boss upon the ceiling, and threw a soft light upon her face, whilst the window was opened just enough to admit the delicious perfume of the aloes and magnolias that were planted outside. With lavish luxury and consummate taste, articles of precious value were arranged about the chamber, and it might have been imagined that the mind of the sleeper was revelling amidst their beauties.

Her father came close to her side and bent down to watch her slumber. She was evidently agitated by some painful dream, and once the name of Martin Paz escaped her lips.

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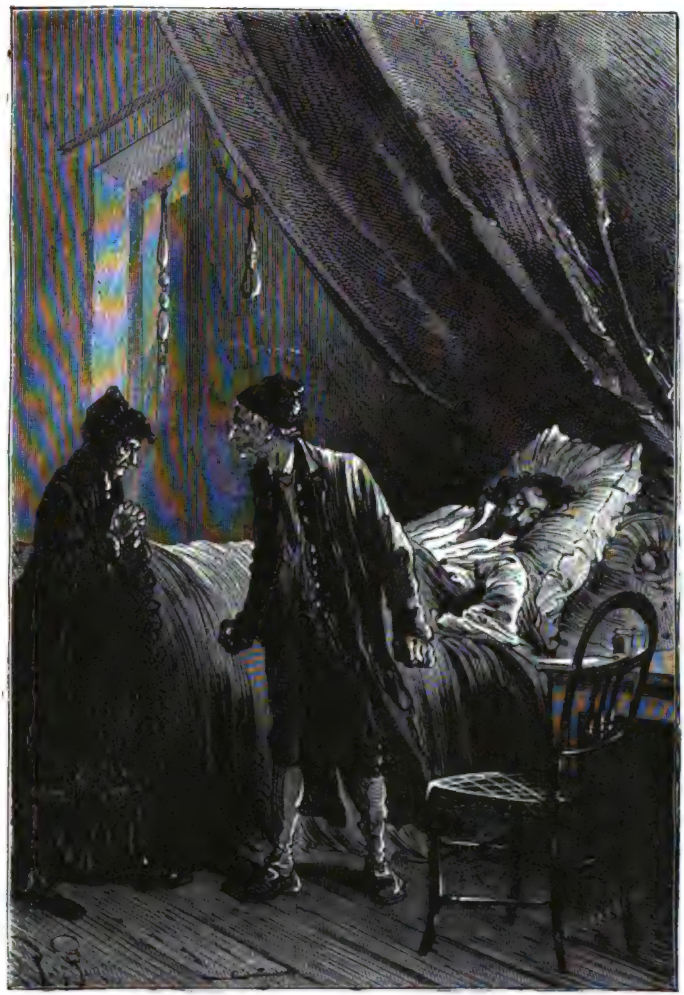

"OUT OF MY SIGHT!" SHOUTED SAMUEL.

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The old man went to his room.

At the break of day Sarah arose in eager haste. She summoned Liberta, a black Indian attached to her service, and made him quickly saddle a horse for himself and a mule for her.

It was no long task for her to array herself in such a toilette as suited her design. She put on a dark brown skirt, over which she threw a cashmere mantle adorned with large tassels. A broad-brimmed hat, and her loosely-flowing tresses of black hair sheltered her face from observation, and the better to conceal the thoughts by which she was preoccupied, she placed a small perfumed cigarette between her lips.

She was no sooner mounted than she started off with her attendant across the country in the direction of Callao. The harbour was all alive with excitement, the coastguards having had to keep watch all night long upon the schooner, whose uncertain tackings indicated a fraudulent design. At one moment it would seem as though the vessel was waiting near the river's mouth for some suspicious-looking boats; but before they came alongside she was off again to avoid the long-boats belonging to the harbour. Many were the surmises about her destination. Some said that she had brought a body of Columbian troops, and intended to take possession of Callao, and to avenge the insult offered to the Bolivian soldiers who had been ignominiously

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expelled from Peru. Others maintained that she was merely a schooner driving a contraband trade in European wool.

To Sarah these speculations were all indifferent. She had only come to the port as a pretext, and now returned to Lima, which she reached at the point nearest to the river. Following the banks of the stream she went as far as the bridge, whence she noticed groups of soldiers and half-breeds gathered in various places along shore.

Liberta had made the girl acquainted with the events of the night. In obedience to her orders he now inquired further particulars from some of the soldiers, and learnt that although Martin Paz was drowned, his body had not yet been recovered.

Ready to faint, Sarah had to gather up all her strength of mind to avoid giving way to her bitter grief. Amongst the people who were wandering up and down the bank she caught sight of a wild-looking Indian, whom she immediately recognized as Sambo. Passing close beside him, she heard him mournfully exclaim, "Alas! alas! they have killed the son of Sambo! My son is dead!"

The girl presently recovered her self-possession, and making a sign to Liberta to follow her, and not troubling herself as to whether she was observed or not, she directed her way to the church of St. Anne, and having left her

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SHE KNELT UPON THE FLAGSTONES AND PRAYED FOR THE SOUL OF MARTIN PAZ.

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mule in Liberta's care, she entered the Catholic house of prayer, and after she had asked for Father Joachim, she knelt upon the flagstones and prayed for the soul of Martin Paz.

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CHAPTER IV.

EXCEPTING Martin Paz there was scarcely another man in all the world to whom the torrent of the Rimac would not have proved a sure destruction. But his strength of body was amazing, and his strength of will resistless; and he was, moreover, greatly aided by that imperturbable *sang-froid* which is characteristic of the free Indians of the New World.

Knowing intuitively that the soldiers would reckon on capturing him below the bridge, where the stream was too powerful to be combated, he put forth all his energy, and succeeded in stemming the torrent the other way. He found the resistance less in the side-currents, and contrived to reach the bank, where he concealed himself behind a cluster of mangroves.

But what would happen next? Soon the soldiers would change their tactics and explore the river upwards; and then what would be his chance of escape? His deter-

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mination was soon taken; he would re-enter the town and find a refuge there.

To elude the observation of any of the residents who might be out late, it would perhaps have been best to take the wider streets. But he could not resist the impression that he was watched, and he dared not hesitate. All at once he caught sight of a house still brilliantly lighted-up; the gateway was open to allow the carriages to pass out, and the very *élite* of the Spanish aristocracy were thence returning to their own homes.

Without being seen he entered the house, and the gates were almost immediately closed behind him. He hurried on, ascending a cedar staircase adorned with costliest tapestry, and after passing through apartments still brilliantly illuminated, but absolutely empty, he found a place of concealment in a dark chamber beyond.

Before long the lamps were all extinguished, and silence reigned throughout the house. Martin ventured from his hiding-place to reconnoitre the situation. He found that the window of the room opened on to a garden below; escape seemed to him to be quite practicable, and he was on the point of leaping down when he was startled by a voice behind him:—

"Stop, señor, you have forgotten to take the diamonds that I left on that table."

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He looked back. There stood a haughty-looking man pointing to a jewel-case that lay before him.

Thus assailed, Martin approached the Spaniard, who was still standing without moving a muscle, and drawing a dagger, which he pointed towards his own heart, he said, with a voice trembling with agitation,—

"Repeat your words, and you find me dead at your feet!"

Dumb with amazement, the Spaniard gazed steadily at the Indian, and felt an involuntary sympathy rising up within him. He went to the window and shut it gently; then, turning to the Indian, who had let his dagger fall to the ground, he asked him who he was, and whence he had come.

"I am Martin Paz. I was escaping the pursuit of the soldiers. I had wounded a half-breed with my dagger. I was defending myself. The man I struck is betrothed to the girl I love. It rests with you to save me, or to surrender me, as you think best."

The Spaniard stood in silent thought. After a while he said,—

"To-morrow I am going to the baths of Chorillos. If it will answer your purpose, go with me. For a time, at least, you will be safe, and you will not have to complain of any lack of hospitality from the Marquis Don Vegal."

Martin Paz bent his head in tacit assent.

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"But now," continued Don Vegal, "you had better take a few hours' rest. No one in the world will suspect your hiding-place."

The Spaniard retired to his own apartment. Martin was deeply touched by the generosity with which he had met, and, relying on the good faith of the marquis, resigned himself to a peaceful slumber.

Next morning, at daybreak, the marquis gave his orders for starting, but previously arranged to have an interview with Samuel the Jew. First of all, however, he went to the early morning mass.

The Peruvian aristocracy were always constant in their attendance at this service. From its earliest foundation Lima had always been pre-eminently Catholic. Besides its numerous churches, it counted at that time no less than twenty-two convents, seventeen monasteries, and four *pensions* for ladies who had not actually taken the veil. To each of these separate establishments was attached its own chapel, so that altogether there could not be less than a hundred places of worship, in which about eight hundred secular and regular priests, and three hundred nuns, besides lay brotherhoods and sisterhoods, devoted themselves to the offices of religion.

As he entered St. Anne's the eye of the marquis was attracted by the kneeling figure of a girl, who was weeping as she prayed. So great was her agitation, that he could

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not repress his sympathy, and was about to address her in some words of kind encouragement, when Father Joachim came up to him and whispered,—

"Do not disturb her, marquis, I pray you!"

And then he beckoned to the girl, who followed him into a dim and empty chapel.

Don Vegal made his way to the altar and attended mass, but could not dismiss from his memory the image of the girl who had so strangely arrested his attention.

Upon his return home he found Samuel the Jew awaiting his commands. He seemed to have entirely forgotten the incidents of the past night; the prospect of gain had made him quite oblivious of all besides, and gave a keen vivacity to the expression of his face.

"I await your lordship's commands," he said.

"I must have thirty thousand piastres within an hour."

"Thirty thousand!" cried the Jew. "How is it possible? By our holy David, I should have more difficulty in finding them than you seem to think."

Without taking any notice of what the usurer was saying, the marquis explained that, besides his valuable cases of jewels, he had a piece of land near Cusco that he would sell at a price far below its real value.

"Land!" exclaimed Samuel. "Why it's land that ruins us! We can't get any labour to till the land since the

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Indians have withdrawn to the mountains. Land! why, its produce does not pay its expenses!"

"But, tell me," said the marquis, "at how much do you value the diamonds alone?"

The old man drew from his pocket a small pair of jeweller's scales, and proceeded to weigh the gems with an air of minute precision, at the same time, according to his habit, keeping up a running current of depreciation.

"Diamonds! yes, they are diamonds; but see how badly set! One might as well bury his money in the ground. Look here! what a stone! no purity about it. I can assure your lordship that I shall find it very difficult to get a customer at all for this costly purchase. Perhaps if I send them to the States, the Northerners will buy them in order to get rid of them to some English purchaser. No doubt they will make a good profit out of them, but then the loss would all fall upon me. Upon my word, your lordship, you must be satisfied with ten thousand piastres. It seems a little, but—

"I have already told you that ten thousand piastres are of no use to me," said the marquis, with an air of profound contempt.

"Not one half-real more. I could not afford it," rejoined the inflexible Jew.

"Then take the caskets; only let me have the sum I ask, and give it me at once. Thirty thousand I must have, and

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you shall have a bond upon this house of mine. Substantial, is it not?"

"Ah, your lordship, but there are so many earthquakes here. One never knows who may be alive and who may be dead from one moment to another, nor yet which houses may stand, or which may fall."

And all the time the Jew was talking he kept stamping with his foot upon the inlaid floor, as if to test its real stability. He paused for an instant, and then resumed,—

"However, to oblige your lordship, it shall be as you wish; although just now I am indisposed to part with ready cash, as I am marrying my daughter to the young squire, André Certa. Do you know him?"

"Not at all. But lose no time: our bargain is made. Take the caskets, and give me the gold."

"Would your lordship wish for a receipt?" asked Samuel.

The marquis condescended to give no reply, and left the room.

"Arrogant Spaniard!" muttered the Jew, and gnashed his teeth in wrath. "Would that I could crush your pride as I can ruin your estate! By Solomon! 'tis clever practice to make one's interests and one's wishes agree so well."

After leaving the Jew, the marquis had gone to Martin Paz. He found him in a state of the gloomiest dejection.

"Well! how now?" he said kindly.

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"Ah, señor! the daughter of that Jew is the girl I love."

"A Jewess!" exclaimed the marquis, in a tone of abhorrence which he could ill disguise; but compassionating the sorrow of the Indian, he only said,—

"Now then, it is time to start; we will talk about these things as we go along."

Within an hour Martin Paz, after changing his clothes, left the town in company with the Marquis Don Vegal, who took no other attendants.

The sea-baths of Chorillos are two leagues distant from Lima. It is a parish inhabited by Indians, and has a pretty church. During the warm season it is a favourite resort of all the *élite* of Lima, for the public gaming-tables, which are forbidden in the city, are here kept open throughout the summer. The ladies especially show a remarkable enthusiasm for this amusement, and during the season many a wealthy knight has seen his large fortune pass away into the hands of his fair opponents.

Just at that time Chorillos was almost deserted, and Don Vegal and Martin Paz, in their retired cottage on the sea-shore, were free to contemplate in peaceful solitude the wide expanse of the Pacific.

The Marquis Don Vegal, a scion of one of the most ancient Spanish families in Peru, was the only surviving representative of that noble lineage of which he was so justly proud. Traces of the deepest melancholy were ever

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visible on his countenance, and although, during a considerable portion of his life, he had been engaged in political affairs, the perpetual revolutions, instigated as they had been by motives of mere personal aggrandizement, so disgusted him with the outer world, that he withdrew from it altogether, and passed his time in a seclusion from which only matters of the strictest etiquette could ever induce him to emerge.

Little by little his fortune, once so immense, was dwindling away; he could with difficulty obtain credit for advances of capital, so that not only had his estates fallen into a condition of great neglect, but he had been obliged to mortgage them very heavily. The prospect of ultimate ruin stared him in the face, but in spite of the hopeless aspect of his affairs he never flinched for a moment. The heedlessness, characteristic of the Spanish race, together with the weariness induced by his objectless life, combined to make him utterly indifferent to the future. He had no domestic ties to bind him to the world; a beloved wife and charming little daughter, the sole objects of his affection, had been snatched from him by a melancholy fate; and he was contented passively to take his chance and await the chapter of events.

But cold and deadened as he had deemed his heart to be, his contact with Martin Paz had done something to awaken him from his habitual lethargy. The fiery tempera-

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ment of the Indian did something towards rekindling the smouldering ashes of the Spaniard's sensitiveness. The marquis was worn out by his association with his fellow-countrymen, in whom he had no confidence; he was disgusted with the insolent half-breeds who were ever encroaching upon the prerogatives of his own order; and so he seemed to turn for relief to that primitive race which had fought so valiantly to defend its soil against the soldiers of Pizarro.

According to the information which the marquis received, it was currently reported that the Indian was dead. Worse than death, however, it appeared to Don Vegal that Martin Paz should ally himself in matrimony to a Jewess, and accordingly he resolved to rescue him doubly by allowing the daughter of Samuel to be married without interference to André Certa. He could not do otherwise than observe the depression which weighed upon Martin, and he hoped to divert him from his melancholy by avoiding the topic entirely, and by continually calling his attention to indifferent matters.

One day, however, distressed at noticing the saddened preoccupation of his guest, he could not resist asking him—

"How is it that the innate nobility of your nature does not revolt against what must be so deep a degradation? Remember your ancestor, the redoubtable Manco-Capac; his patriotism exalted him to the highest rank of heroes,

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and no one with a noble part to play should condescend to an ignoble passion. Do you not burn to regain the independence of your soil?"

"Ah, señor," said the Indian, "we never lose sight of that glorious enterprise, and the day is not far off when my brethren will rise *en masse* to accomplish it!"

"I understand to what you refer," replied the marquis; "you are thinking of that secret war which you are planning in the retirement of the mountains; you are going to descend in full array, and at a concerted signal pounce upon the town below. Yes, you may come, but you will come, as you have always come, only to be vanquished. You have not the faintest hope of making good your hold amidst the continual revolutions of which Peru must be the scene,—revolutions which elevate the half-breeds to the detriment alike of Indians and of Spaniards."

"Nay, but we will save our country!" was Martin's eager remonstrance.

"Save it? yes, you may; if only you comprehend your proper part. But listen to me for a moment. I would speak to you as tenderly as though you were my son. I tell you, although I own it with the deepest sorrow, that we Spaniards are degenerate sons of a once powerful race: our energy is gone, and we entirely lack the vigour to regain the supremacy we have lost. But it rests with you to prevail; and prevail you can if you will only crush the

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"NAY, BUT WE WILL SAVE OUR COUNTRY!"

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mischievous spirit of Americanism which is refusing to tolerate the settlement of foreigners as colonists amongst us. Be sure of this: there is only one policy that can save the old Peruvian Empire; you must have a European immigration. The intestine war which you are contemplating can effect no good at all; it will only trample out every grade but the one you want to extinguish. Nothing can be done except you frankly stretch out the hand of welcome to the labouring population of the Old World."

"Indians, señor," replied Martin Paz, "must ever be the sworn foes of strangers, let them come whence they will. Indians will never tolerate the claims of foreigners to plant their footsteps upon their soil or to breathe their mountain air. My control over them is of such a character that it would not last a moment longer than I should denounce death to every oppressor of their liberty. It must be borne in mind, too," he continued, in a tone of mournful despondency, "that I am myself a fugitive with not three hours to live if I were to venture into the streets of Lima."

"Lima!" exclaimed the marquis, "you must promise me at least that you will not trust yourself in Lima!"

"Were I to pledge myself to that," said Martin, "I should be disguising the true intention of my heart."

Don Vegal sat and mused in silence. There was no room to doubt that the Indian's passion was growing more intense from day to day, and the marquis knew that if he

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should presume to enter Lima he would to a certainty be exposing himself to an immediate death. What could he do but resolve by any and all means at his command to hurry on the marriage of the young Jewess to André Certa.

To convince himself of the true state of affairs the marquis rose betimes one morning and made his way from Chorillos back into the town. He was there informed that André Certa had so far recovered from his wound that he was about again, and that his approaching marriage was the subject of general gossip.

Desirous of seeing the maiden who had so completely captivated Martin Paz, the Marquis Don Vegal directed his steps towards the Plaza Mayor at the evening hour, when the throng was invariably very great, and on his way encountered his old friend, Father Joachim. The monk was extremely astonished at being informed that Martin Paz was still alive, and nothing could exceed the eagerness with which he undertook to keep a watch on behalf of the young Indian, and to acquaint the marquis with any intelligence which might be of interest to him.

While the two were conversing, the attention of the marquis was arrested by a young girl enveloped in a black mantle, who was reclining on the low seat of a barouche.

"Who is that handsome young lady?" he inquired of Father Joachim.

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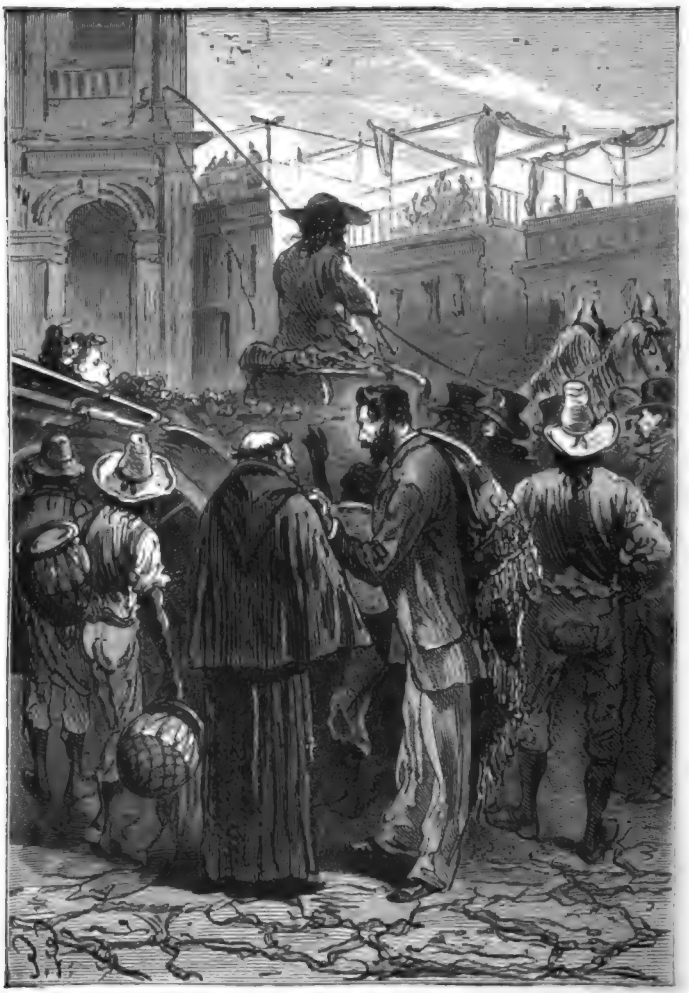

"THAT IS OLD SAMUEL'S DAUGHTER."

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"That is old Samuel's daughter, the girl who is on the point of marrying André Certa," said the monk.

"*That* the daughter of a Jew!" involuntarily exclaimed Don Vegal; but he restrained further expression of his astonishment, shook hands with his friend, and retraced his way to Chorillos.

His surprise bewildered him still more when he came to consider that perchance she was only a Jewess in disguise; he had recognized her as the girl whom he had seen kneeling in prayer within the Church of St. Anne.

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CHAPTER V.

AFTER the Columbian troops, that had been placed by Bolivar under the command of General Santa Cruz, had been driven out of Lower Peru, the country, hitherto disordered by military revolutions, enjoyed a period of unbroken repose. To say the truth, the ambition of separate individuals became much less plainly pronounced, and the president, Gambarra, seemed to be securely quartered in his palace on the Plaza Mayor. From this source nothing was to be feared; danger there might be, but it was not to be anticipated from rebellions which were extinguished as soon as they kindled, and which seemed only to afford an agreeable opportunity for the people to display their military tastes.

Altogether this was a peril which did not occur to the Spaniards, who were too dignified in their high position to bestow a thought upon it; whilst the half-breeds were always indisposed to give their attention to anything that they considered at all beneath them.

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All this time, however, a very unusual agitation was going on amongst the Indians; those of them who resided in the town keeping up a vigourous communication with those who habitually made their homes amongst the mountains. They seemed for a time to have shaken off the dulness of their native apathy. No longer lounging wrapped in their ponchos and basking in the sunshine, they were ever and again hurrying to and fro in the direction of the open country; they greeted one another significantly as they met; they were ever making mysterious signs of mutual recognition, and continually held their meetings in out-of-the-way, second-rate hotels, where they could carry on their conferences without any risk of being observed.

This unusual commotion was for the most part obvious in one of the loneliest quarters of the town. At the corner of a street there was a dejected tenement, only one story high, the miserable appearance of which could not fail to attract observation. It was a kind of tap-room, of the lowest description, kept by an old Indian woman, who found her customers entirely amongst the most abject of the poor, who bought her beer made from fermented maize, or, failing that, contented themselves with a decoction of sugar-canes.

It was only at certain hours that there was any gathering of Indians at that spot, the signal of meeting being a long pole displayed on the roof of the building. But whenever

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notice was given there was soon a motley assemblage of the lowest class of the natives; there were cabriolet-drivers, muleteers, and carmen hurrying to the place of rendezvous, without loitering for a moment outside. The hostess was all on the alert, and, leaving the care of her counter to the charge of a servant-maid, hastened herself to give her best attention to her habitual guests.

A few days after the disappearance of Martin Paz there was a concourse larger than usual collected in the large room of the inn. The apartment was dim with clouds of tobacco-smoke, and it was with much difficulty that any one of the *habitués* of the place could be distinguishsd from another. Altogether there were about fifty Indians congregated around the long table, some of whom were chewing a kind of tea-leaf mixed with a morsel of fragrant earth, whilst others were drinking fermented liquor from huge cans; but none of them seemed so much absorbed in their own doings as to prevent them from attending to the speech in which an old Indian was addressing them.

This Indian was no other than Sambo, and the whole assembly appeared to be following him with an eager interest. He looked with a keen scrutiny round the circle of his audience, and, after a brief pause, continued his appeal.

"The Children of the Sun can now discuss their own affairs quite unmolested. No perfidious spy can overhear them here. All round about are friends who, disguised as

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wandering street-singers, attract the passers-by, and prevent all interruption, so that now we may enjoy an uncontrolled and ample liberty."

And while he spoke the notes of a mandolin were heard thrumming in the thoroughfare hard by.

Certified as to their security, the whole gathering of Indians prepared to pay a yet closer attention to the words of Sambo, who manifestly enjoyed their largest confidence. One of the party, however, interrupted him by asking abruptly,—

"Can Sambo give us any tidings of Martin Paz?"

"None whatever," he replied; "nor can I tell you whether he is alive or dead: the Great Spirit alone knows that. But I am expecting some of our brethren back who have been exploring the river down to its very mouth, and they perchance will have something to relate about the lost body of your chief."

"Ay, he might be a good leader," said an Indian named Manangani, with the fierce, bold manner that belonged to him; "but why was he wanting in his duty, and absent from his post on the very night that the schooner arrived with our arms?"

The question elicited no reply. Sambo hung his head in silence.

"Are our brethren aware," continued Manangani, "that there was an exchange of shots that night between the

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schooner and the coastguards, and do they know that the capture of the 'Annunciation' would have been fatal to our enterprise?"

A murmur of assent ran through the assembly.

Sambo now took up the conversation, saying that all who would wait to judge the matter would be welcome.

"And who knows," he said, "whether my son shall not some day reappear? Be patient still. Even now the arms which we received from Sechura are in our keeping; safe they are in the mountain recesses of the Cordilleras, and ready to fulfil their work when you are prepared to do your duty."

"And what shall hinder us?" exclaimed a young Indian; "our weapons are sharpened, and we only bide our time."

"The hour will come," said Sambo; "but do our brethren know on whom the blow ought first to fall?"

The voice of one of the party was heard protesting that the first to perish ought to be the half-breeds who had treated them so insolently, chastising them like restive mules.

"Not so," declared another; "the first that we should strike should be the appropriators of the soil we tread."

"Mistaken are ye altogether!" shouted Sambo, with a voice raised in eagerness. "You must let your blows fall first in another quarter. It is not those of whom you speak that have dared for three centuries to plant their foot upon

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our ancestral soil; rich as they are, it is not they who have dragged the descendants of Manco-Capac to the tomb. No; rather 'tis the haughty Spaniards who are the true conquerors, and who have reduced you to the condition of being their very slaves. Their riches may have gone, but their authority survives, and they it is who (in spite of any emancipation that should give liberty to Peru) still trample our natural rights beneath their feet. Let us forget what we are, just that for once we may remember what our fathers were."

"True! true!" was the shout that burst forth from many a voice in the excited company.

Then ensued a few moments of silent consideration, when Sambo proceeded to make inquiries of some of the conspirators and to satisfy himself that their allies in Cusco and throughout Bolivia were ready to rise as one man.

His enthusiasm soon again broke out in speech.

"And our brethren on the mountains, brave Manangani, only let them cherish in their souls a hatred such as yours, and arm themselves with your courage, too, and they shall fall upon Lima as an avalanche might come crashing down from the Cordilleras."

"Sambo shall not need to complain," said Manangani; "their firmness will not fail them at the proper time. Go but a few yards beyond the town and you shall find groups of eager Indians fired with the passion of revenge. In the

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gorges of San Cristoval and the Amancäes many a one beneath his poncho wears his poignard hanging in his belt, and only waits to have the rifle trusted to his hand. Never will they forget to exact the vengeance that is due from the Spaniards for their defeat of Manco-Capac."

"Good!" replied Sambo; "it is the God of hatred that inspires your lips. My brethren shall soon know what their chiefs have decided. All that Gambarra wants now is to consolidate his power; Bolivar has retired; Santa Cruz has been chased away, and we can act in perfect safety. Wait but a few days and our adversaries will be taking their pleasure at the coming festival of the Amancäes. Then will be our time; then must we set ourselves in motion, and the summons must be heard even to the remotest village of Bolivia."

Three Indians at this moment entered the room. Sambo received them with the eager inquiry,—

"Well, what news? Is he found?"

"No," replied one of the three; "the body is nowhere to be found. Though we have searched every foot of the river bank, and sent the most skilful of our divers down to search the depths, we find no trace of Sambo's son. Doubtless he has perished in the waters of the Rimac."

"Have they then killed him? Is he lost? Woe, woe to them if they have slain my son!" Then, repressing his passion, he added, "Let my brothers now go quietly away.

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"WHO GAVE YOU THIS?"

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Go ye away to your place, but be on your guard and ready for the call."

All the Indians gradually took their departure, leaving Sambo and Manangani alone behind.

"Do you know," asked Manangani, "what was the motive that took your son that night to the quarter of San Lazaro? Are you sure of him?"

"Sure of him!" said Sambo, re-echoing the words, with a flash of indignant wrath in his eyes beneath which Manangani involuntarily recoiled, "sure of him! If Martin Paz should be a traitor to his friends, I would first slay every soul to whom he had given his friendship; nay, I would not spare them to whom he had yielded his dearest love; and then I would kill him; and, last of all, I would kill myself. Perish everything beneath the sun rather than dishonour should befall our race."

His fervid speech was interrupted by the hostess bringing in a letter addressed to him.

"Who gave you this?" he asked.

"I cannot tell," replied the woman; "it was left, apparently by design, as if forgotten by one of the men who have been drinking at one of the tables."

"Have any but Indians been in here?" he inquired.

"None whatever but Indians," was her prompt reply.

As soon as the woman had gone he unfolded the document and read it aloud:—

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"A young girl has been praying for Martin Paz. She cannot forget one who has imperilled his life for the sake of hers. Has Sambo any tidings of his son? If he has news of him, let him bind a scarlet band around his arm. There are eyes ever on the watch to see him pass."

Crumpling up the paper, he exclaimed,—

"Unhappy fool! to be entangled by the fascinations of a pretty girl!"

"Who is she?" inquired Manangani.

"No Indian maid," said Sambo, "some dainty damsel full of airs. Ah, Martin Paz, you are beside yourself! I know you not!"

"Do you mean to do what the woman asks?"

"No!" said the Indian vehemently, "let her abandon all hope of setting eyes upon my son again, and let her die in ignorance!"

And while he spoke he angrily tore the paper into fragments.

"It must have been an Indian who brought the letter," observed Manangani.

"Not one of our party. It is known well enough that I am often here, but I shall not come again. Now do you return to the mountains. I will keep watch in the town. The feast day comes, and we shall see whether it be a festival of rejoicing for the oppressors or the oppressed."

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With this parting direction the two Indians each departed on his own way.

The plot of the Indians had been deeply laid, and the time for its execution was adroitly chosen. The population of Peru was reduced to a comparatively small number of Spaniards and half-breeds. From the forests of Brazil, from the mountains of Chili, from the plains of La Plata, the hordes of Indians had been summoned, and would find it an easy task to cover the whole territory which was to be the theatre of revolution. Once let the larger towns, Lima, Cusco, and Puno, fall into their hands, and victory was all their own. There was no fear of the Columbian troops, who had recently been driven out by the Peruvian government, returning to assist their adversaries in the hour of their necessity.

And it can hardly be doubted that this revolutionary movement would have resulted in entire success if its intention had been confided to none but Indian breasts: amongst them there was no fear of treachery.

But they knew not that there was a man who already had obtained a private audience with Gambarra, and had apprized him that the schooner "Annunciation" had been unlading fire-arms of every description into the canoes and pirogues of the Indians at the mouth of the Rimac; they knew not that that man had gone to claim a reward from

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the Peruvian Government for the very service of exposing their own proceedings.

A double game was this. The man who for a large payment had chartered his ship to Sambo for the conveyance of the arms, had gone at once to the president and betrayed the existence of the conspiracy.

The man, of course, was Samuel the Jew.

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CHAPTER VI.

As soon as he was restored to health, André Certa, still believing in the death of Martin Paz, began to hurry on his marriage. His intended bride continued to regard him with the most perfect indifference; but this did not occasion him any concern; he regarded her solely as a costly article for which he had to pay the handsome price of 100,000 piastres.

It must be alleged that André had no confidence at all in the Jew, and he was right in entertaining mistrust. If the contract had been void of honesty, so were the contractors void of principle. Accordingly André was now anxious for a private interview with Samuel, and for that purpose took him for a day to Chorillos, where he also hoped to have the chance of trying a little gambling before his marriage.

The gaming-tables had been opened at the baths a few days after the marquis's arrival, and ever since they had

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been the means of keeping up an incessant traffic along the road to Lima. Some came on foot, who returned with the luxury of a carriage; whilst others came only fairly to exhaust the remnant of a shattered fortune.

Neither Don Vegal nor Martin Paz took any share in the play; the restlessness of the young Indian was caused by a far nobler game. After their evening walks Martin would take leave of the marquis, and, going to his own room, would lounge with his elbows on the window-sill, and spend hours in silent reverie.

Nothing could ever divert the marquis from ever and again recalling to his recollection the young girl whom he had seen praying in the Catholic church, but he did not venture to entrust the secret to his guest, although he took occasion little by little to acquaint him with the essentials of the Christian faith. He hesitated to allude to the girl, because he was fearful of reviving the very interest that he was anxious to allay. It was necessary that the Indian should renounce every hope of obtaining the hand of Sarah. Only let the police, he thought, abandon their search for Martin, and his protector did not doubt that in the course of time he could procure him an introduction into the first circle of Peruvian society.

But Martin Paz would not surrender himself to despair without assuring himself of the hopelessness of his chance. He resolved at all risks to know the actual destiny of the

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young Jewess. Screened from suspicion by his Spanish attire, he thought he might enter into the gambling-halls, and so hear the conversation of those who habitually frequented them. André Certa was a person of sufficient note to make his marriage, as it drew near, a topic of considerable talk.

One evening, therefore, instead of turning his steps towards the sea-shore, the Indian bent his way towards the high cliffs on which the principal houses in Chorillos were built, and entered a house that was approached by a large flight of stone steps. This was the gambling-house.

The day had been trying to more than one of the people of Lima. Some of them, worn out by the fatigue of the preceding night, were reposing on the ground, covered with their ponchos.

The other gamblers were seated before a large table covered with green baize, and divided into four compartments by two lines that cut each other at right angles in the middle. Each of these compartments was marked with either the letter A., or the letter S., the initial letters of the Spanish words "asar," and "suerte," hazard and chance. The players put their money upon whichever of the letters they chose, a croupier held the stakes, and threw two dice upon the table, and the combined readings of the points determined whether A. or S. was the winner.

At this particular moment there was a general anima-

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tion, and one half-breed could be noticed persevering against ill-luck with a feverish determination.

"Two thousand piastres!" he exclaimed.

The croupier shook the dice, and a muttered curse fell from the player's lips.

"Four thousand piastres!" he said.

But again he lost.

Protected by the shadows of the hall, Martin Paz caught a glimpse of the player's face. It was André Certa, and close beside him stood the Jew Samuel.

"There," said Samuel, "that's play enough. The luck is all against you to-day."

"Curse the luck!" said André impetuously, "it does not matter to you."

The Jew whispered in the young man's ear,—

"It may not matter to me; but to you it matters much, and you should desist from the practice for the few days before your marriage."

"Eight thousand piastres!" was the only reply that André made, as he laid his stake upon the S.

"A. wins," was the immediate decision of the dice, and the half-breed's blaspheming oaths were hardly covered by the croupier's summons, "Make your game, gentlemen; make your game."

Taking a roll of notes from his pocket, André was on the point of hazarding a still larger sum; he was placing

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"THERE," SAID SAMUEL, "THAT'S PLAY ENOUGH."

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them on the table, and the croupier was already shaking his dice, when at a signal from Samuel he all at once stopped short.

The Jew bent his head again towards the ear of André, and said,—

"You will have nothing left to-night to close our bargain. Everything will then be broken off."

André shrugged his shoulders, and uttered an ejaculation of rage; but he took up the money he had staked, and went out of the room.

"You may go on now," said Samuel, addressing the croupier; "you may ruin that gentleman if you like, but not until after his marriage."

The croupier bowed obsequiously. The Jew was the originator and proprietor of the gaming-house. Wherever there was gold to be won, he was sure to be found.

Following the young half-breed out, he overtook him upon the stone steps, and telling him that he had matters of great importance to communicate to him, asked where they might converse in uninterrupted security.

"Where you please!" said André, with abrupt discourtesy.

"Let me advise you, señor," said Samuel, "not to let your bad temper interfere with your future advantage. My secret is not to be revealed within the best closed doors; no, nor yet in the most secluded wilderness. It is a secret

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for which you think you are paying me a good high price, but let me assure you it is well worth keeping."

While they were thus talking they came to the spot where the bathing-houses were erected; but they had no idea how they were being overlooked and overheard by Martin Paz, who had glided after them like a serpent.

"Let us take a boat," said André, "and put out to sea."

He then loosened a light boat from its moorings on the shore, and flinging some money to its owner, he made Samuel get in, and pushed off into the open water.

No sooner did Martin Paz observe the boat leave the shore than, concealed by a projecting rock, he hastily undressed, and taking the precaution to fasten on his belt, to which he attached a poignard, he swam with all his strength in the same direction. By this time the sun had sunk below the horizon, and the obscurity of twilight enveloped both sea and sky.

One thing Martin had forgotten. He did not call to mind that the waters of these latitudes were infested with sharks of the most ferocious kind; but, plunging recklessly into the fatal flood, he made good his way till he was near enough to the boat just to catch the voices of the two as they spoke.

"But what proof am I to give the father of the girl's identity?" were the first words he heard André say.

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"Proof! why, you must detail the circumstances under which he lost his child."

"What were the circumstances?" asked André.

"Listen, and you shall hear," replied the Jew.

Martin Paz could only by an effort keep his position within ear-shot of the boat, and what he heard he failed to comprehend.

The Jew proceeded to say,—

"It was in Chili, at Conception, that Sarah's father lived. He is a nobleman that you already know, and his wealth was according to his rank. He was obliged, by business of a pressing nature, to come to Lima. He came alone, leaving behind his wife and a little daughter only five months old. In every respect the climate of Peru was agreeable to him, and he sent for his lady to join him there. Bringing with her only a few trusty servants, she embarked on the 'San José,' of Valparaiso. On that ship it chanced that I was myself a passenger. The 'San José' was bound to put into harbour at Lima; but just off the point of Juan Fernandez she was exposed to a terrific hurricane, which disabled her, and laid her upon her beam-ends. The whole of the crew, and the passengers, betook themselves to the long-boat, but at the sight of the raging sea, the marchioness refused to enter the boat, but clasping her infant in her arms, resolved at all hazards to remain where she was. I remained with her. The long-boat made off,

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but before it had proceeded a hundred fathoms from the ship, it was swallowed up in the angry waters. The two of us remained alone. The storm came on with increasing fury. As I had not my property on board, I was not reduced to a condition of absolute despair. The 'San José,' with five feet of water in her hold, drove upon the rocks and was dashed to pieces. The lady with her child was thrown into the sea. It was my fortune to be able to rescue the little girl, although I saw the mother perish before my eyes; and with the child in my arms, I contrived to reach the shore."

"Are these details all correct?" asked André.

"Yes, to the most minute particular. The father will not deny them. Ah! I did a good day's work when I earned that 100,000 piastres which you are going to pay me."

Perplexed beyond measure, Martin could not suppress the ejaculation, "What does all this mean?"

"Here," said André, taking out his purse, "here is your money."

"Thanks!" replied Samuel, eagerly pocketing the cash, "and here is your receipt. I guarantee to return you twice the sum if you do not find yourself a member of one of the noblest Spanish families."

Martin Paz was more bewildered than ever. He could give no meaning to what he heard. The boat began to

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move in his direction, and he was about to dive below the water to elude observation when he saw a huge black mass rolling onwards towards him.

It was a tintorea, a shark of the most voracious kind.

Although the Indian dived immediately, he was soon obliged to come to the surface to take breath. As he rose he was struck by the tail of the shark, and felt the slimy scales against his breast. In order to grasp its prey, the animal, according to its habit, rolled over on its back, and displayed its monstrous jaw armed with its triple rows of teeth; but in an instant Martin, catching a glimpse of its white belly, made a desperate effort, and plunged in his dagger to its very hilt.

The waves around him were all red with blood; he made another dive, and, rising about ten fathoms away, had entirely lost sight of the boat. A few more strokes, and he regained the shore, hardly conscious of the hairbreadth escape he had had from the most terrible of deaths.

Next day he was gone from Chorillos, and Don Vegal, harassed by misgivings, hurried with all speed to Lima, in the hope of finding him.

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CHAPTER VII.

QUITE an event was the approaching marriage of André Certa with the daughter of the affluent Jew. The ladies had no time for repose; the necessity of inventing new fashions and for preparing elaborate costumes to grace the occasion occupied every thought and taxed every resource.

The mansion of the Jew was especially the scene of bustle, as he was resolved to give a most sumptuous entertainment in honour of Sarah's wedding. The frescoes which decorated the walls in Spanish fashion were restored at a large expense; hangings of the most costly quality were hung at every window and over every door; handsome furniture, carved of fragrant wood, diffused a pleasant odour throughout the spacious rooms, whilst plants of the rarest and loveliest growth, the products of the most luxuriant regions of the tropics, adorned the balconies and terraces at every turn.

The maiden herself, however, was the victim of despair.

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Sambo had no longer any hope, otherwise he would have worn the red token on his arm. Her servant Liberta had been sent to keep a watch upon the old Indian, but he had been unable to discover anything.

Could the girl only have been free to follow the dictates of her heart she would not have hesitated an instant to have sought a refuge in the nearest convent, and to have made her vows for all her future life. Attracted as she was with the doctrines of the Catholics as they had been irresistibly expounded to her by the eloquence of Father Joachim, she would have surrendered herself with the most genuine of zeal to the influences of that faith which was winding itself so sympathetically around the longings of her heart.

The monk, anxious to avoid every suspicion of scandal, and being better read in his breviary than in the passions of human nature, allowed Sarah to believe in the death of Martin Paz. The girl's conversion to his own mind seemed a matter of supreme importance, and presuming that this would be secured by her marriage with André, he tried to reconcile her to the union, without at all knowing the conditions under which it was concluded.

At length the day arrived, a day so full of congratulations to one party, so heavy in misgivings to the other. André Certa had issued his invitations to well-nigh the whole town, but had the mortification of finding that, under some pretext or other, all the superior families had excused themselves.

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The hour struck at which the marriage contract had to be signed, and expectation rose to its height, when all became aware that the bride had not appeared.

The annoyance and alarm of the old Jew were intense. The frown that lowered on the brow of André Certa was the witness of mingled anger and amazement. Embarrassment seized every guest; and the whole scene was brought out in singular distinctness by the thousands of wax lights, whose rays were reflected from the countless mirrors all around.

Meanwhile, outside in the general thoroughfare, there was a man pacing up and down in a state of the wildest excitement. That man was the Marquis Don Vegal.

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CHAPTER VIII.

THROUGHOUT this period Sarah, a prey to the bitterest anguish, remained in the solitude of her own room. Nothing could induce her to quit it. Once, half stifled by her emotion, she sought relief by going to the balcony that overhung the garden below.

At that very instant she caught sight of a man wending his way through the groves of magnolias, and recognized her servant Liberta. To all appearance he was stealthily watching some one who did not see him. At one moment he was concealing himself behind a statue, at the next he was crouching on the grass.

Then all at once the girl turned pale. There was Liberta struggling with a tall man who had thrown him to the ground, and who was pressing his hand over his mouth so that he could only utter a feeble groan.

She was about to cry out, when she saw the two men rise together from the ground, and deliberately make a survey of each other.

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"You! you! is it you?" said Liberta.

There had risen to her vision what appeared to be a phantom from another world, and as Liberta now followed the man who had felled him to the earth, she recognized Martin Paz, and was unable to do more than re-echo the words she had heard,—

"You! you! is it you?"

Gazing at her intently, Martin addressed her with an earnest appeal.

"Does the bride hear the revelry of the bridal feast? Are not the guests speeding to the hall, that they may rejoice in the beauty of her charms? The victim, is she prepared for the sacrifice? Is it with these pale cheeks, and trembling lips, that she is going to surrender herself to the bridegroom?"

She scarcely understood him, but he continued his pathetic address,—

"Why should the maiden weep? There is peace *there;* far away from the house of her father; far away from the home where she drops her tears of bitterness; there is peace *there.*"

And drawing himself to his full height, he stood pointing with his finger to the summits of the Cordilleras, as if showing that there was a refuge in the mountains to which she might escape.

The girl felt herself constrained by an irresistible impulse.

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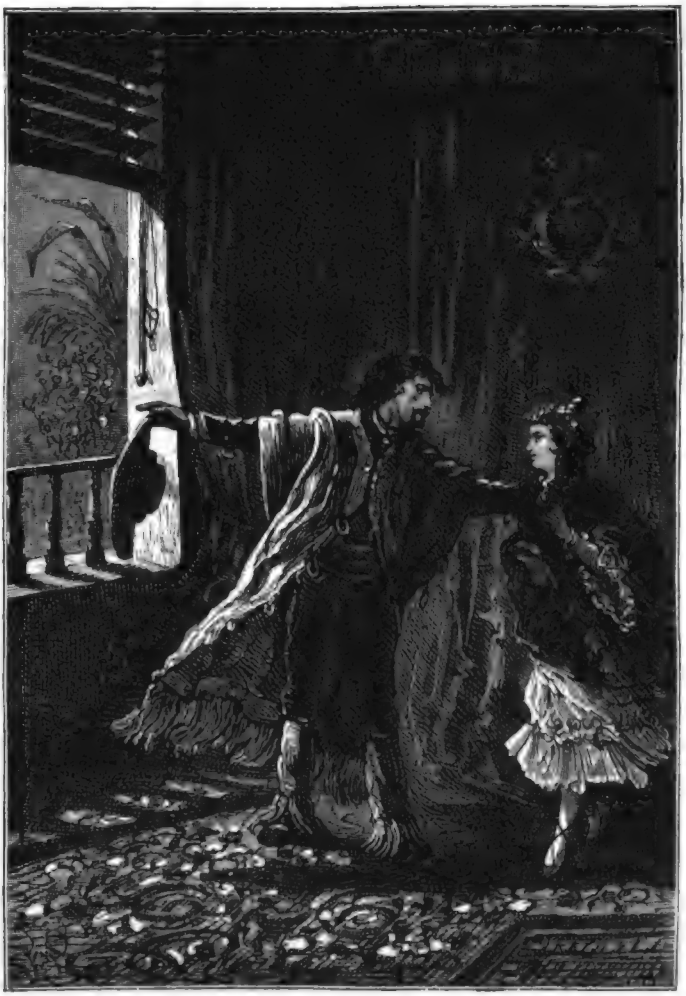

HE STOOD POINTING WITH HIS FINGER TO THE SUMMITS OF THE CORDILLERAS.

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There were voices close to her very chamber; she heard the sound of approaching footsteps; her father was on his way, perchance the man to whom she was betrothed was coming too. Suddenly Martin Paz extinguished the lamp that hung above her head, and his whistle, just as on that evening on the Plaza-Mayor, resounded shrilly through the gathering shades of night.

The door burst open. Samuel and André Certa hurried in. The darkness was all bewildering. The servants hastened to bring some lanterns; but the room was empty.

"Death and fury!" shrieked the half-breed.

"Where is she?" exclaimed the Jew.

"For this," said André, with the coarsest insolence, "I hold you responsible."

A cold sweat came over the old man, and uttering a cry of anguish, he rushed away, followed by his servants.

All this time Martin Paz had been flying, at fullest speed, along the streets of the town. Summoned by his well-known signal, at about two hundred paces from Samuel's house, there were several Indians ready at his call.

"Away to our mountains!" he cried.

"To the Marquis Don Vegal's!" came from a voice close behind.

The Indian turned, and found the marquis standing by his side.

"Will you not trust the maiden to me?" said Don Vegal.

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Martin bowed his head in token of assent, and said in a smothered voice: "To the house of the Marquis Don Vegal!"

Thus yielding her to the marquis, Martin had every confidence that the girl would be in safety, and from a feeling of what was owing to propriety, he resolved that he would not himself pass the night under the marquis's roof.

He made his way in another direction; his head was hot, and a fevered blood was throbbing in his veins; but he had hardly gone a hundred yards, when a party of half a dozen men threw themselves across his path, and in spite of his obstinate resistance, secured his arms, and blindfolded him. He raised a cry of desperation, supposing that he had fallen into the hands of his foes.

It did not take many minutes to convey him to a neighbouring resort, and on the bandage being removed from his eyes, he saw at once that he was in the low room of the tavern where his associates had organized their scheme of revolution.

Sambo, who had been present at the rescue of the young girl, was there; Manangani and some others were standing round him. Martin's eyes flashed angrily.

"No pity had my son for me," said Sambo. "Shame that for so long he should permit me to believe that he was dead."

"Is it fair," asked Manangani, "that on the very eve of

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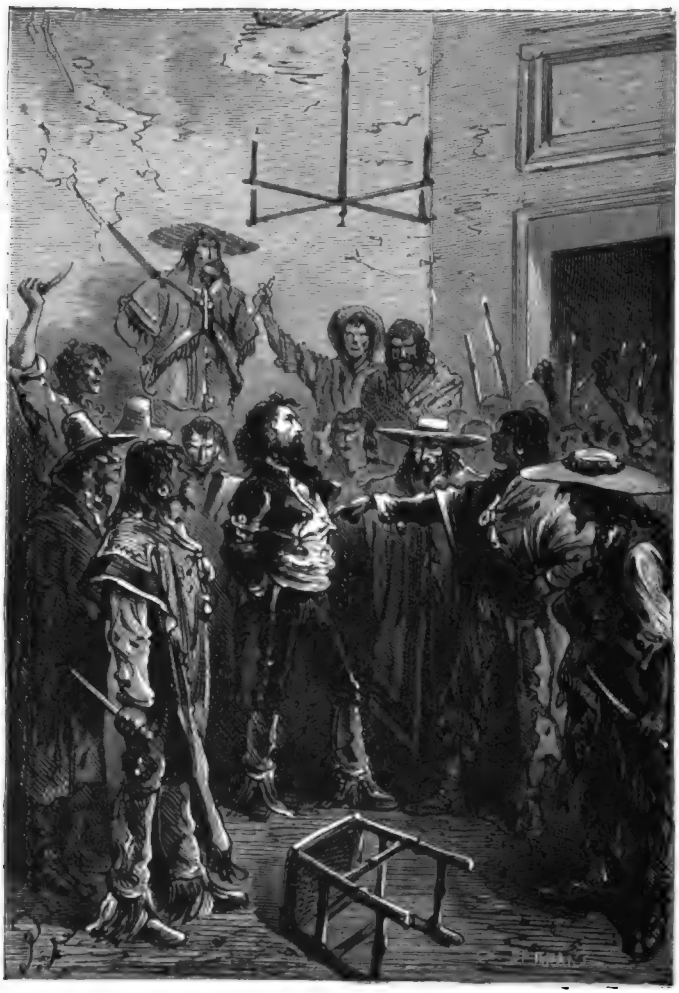

"IF MY SON IS DISLOYAL TO HIS BRETHREN, I SHALL KNOW HOW TO EXACT A PROPER VENGEANCE."

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a revolution, Martin Paz, our chief, should betake himself to the quarters of the enemy."

Not a word fell from the lips of the prisoner in reply to either one or the other.

"Why should it be tolerated," demanded Manangani, "that our interests should be sacrificed to a woman?" and as he spoke he approached nearer to Martin, holding a poignard in his hand.

Martin Paz did not even glance at him, but still stood perfectly unmoved.

"Let us speak first," said Sambo, "and act afterwards. If my son is disloyal to his brethren, I shall know how to exact a proper vengeance. Let him be on his guard! That Jew's daughter is not concealed so closely as to elude our grasp. He must think betimes. Let him once be condemned to die, and there will not be a stone in the town on which he could rest his head; let him, on the other hand, be the deliverer of his country, and he may crown that head with perpetual glory!"

Although Martin Paz did not break his silence, it was obvious that a mighty struggle was going on within his soul: Sambo had succeeded in stirring the depths of that ardent nature.

For all the projects of insurrection Martin Paz was indispensable. His was an influence over the Indians of the town which none but himself enjoyed; he bent them

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at his will; he had but to give the word, and they were prepared to follow him to death.

By Sambo's order the bonds were removed from his arms, and he stood at liberty. The old Indian looked at him steadily, and bade him once more listen.

"To-morrow," he said, "is the feast of the Amancaes. While the festival is at its height, our brethren will fall like an avalanche upon the unarmed and unsuspecting men of Lima. Now take your choice. There is the way to the mountains: there is the way to the town. You are free!"

"To the mountains! to the mountains!" shouted Martin; "and death to our foes!"

And the first rays of the rising sun cast a ruddy glow into the council-chamber of the Indian chiefs in the heart of the Cordilleras.

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CHAPTER IX.

AND now the great annual fête of the Amancaes had arrived. It was the 24th of June. On foot, on horseback, in carriages, the bulk of the population made its way to the well-known spot about half a league from the town. Indians and half-breeds were wont alike to share the mutual recreation; kinsmen and acquaintances marched gaily to the festive scene. Each group carried its own stock of provisions, and many of them were headed by a musician, who accompanied the popular melodies which he sung with the notes of his guitar. Starting through the fields of maize and indigo, they entered the banana-groves beyond, and traversed the charming avenues of willows which led them to the woods, where the aromatic odour of citrons and oranges mingled with the wild perfume of the hills. All along the route the itinerant vendors hawked a liberal supply of beer and brandy, which served to excite the merriment, and at times to stimulate the boisterousness of

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the pleasure-seeking multitude. Equestrians made their horses prance in the very middle of the crowd, vying with one another in displaying their speed and dexterity.

The festival derives its name from the little flowers that grow on the mountains. There is a universal licence, yet it is exceedingly rare for the noise of a quarrel to be heard mingling with the thousand demonstrations of general joy. A few lancers here and there, wearing their flashing cuirasses, are more than sufficient to preserve order among the teeming crowds.

As soon as the entire gathering had assembled on the plain of the Amancaes, a mighty cheer was raised which was re-echoed back from the caverns of the hills beyond.

Beneath the feet of the spectators the ancient city of the kings revealed itself, adorned with its numerous steeples and bell-towers, that were now pealing forth their sonorous chimes. The churches of San Pedro and Saint Augustine, as well as the great cathedral, arrested the eye as the sunbeams fell upon their spacious roofs. Rising conspicuously above all was the handsome lantern-tower of the richly-endowed church of San Domingo, where the Madonna is never arrayed in the same drapery for two days in succession. To the right, the waves of the Pacific rolled their azure flood along the landscape, and the eye as it glanced from Lima to Callao rested on the mausoleums in which

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reposed the ashes of the ancient dynasty of the Incas of Peru. Upon the horizon the promontory of Morro-Solar gave an appropriate finish to the glorious picture.

But whilst the festive crowd were enjoying the fair prospect, a bloody tragedy had been prepared below the snowy summits of the Cordilleras. Whilst the homes of Lima were being deserted by their occupants, a great number of Indians were wandering about the streets. They had been usually accustomed to join the general festivity, but on this occasion they went to and fro in the town, silent and preoccupied. Every now and then a busy chief would give them some secret order, and pass quickly on his way Little by little they concentrated all their force upon the richest quarters of the town.

Thus the day of rejoicing passed on, and as the sun began to sink into the west, the time arrived in which the aristocrats in their turn went out to join the general throng. The costliest of dresses were seen in the handsomest of carriages which lined the avenues on either side of the road that led to the Amancaes, and pedestrians, horses, and vehicles were mingled in inextricable confusion.

The cathedral clock now tolled the hour of five.

Up from the town there rose a mighty cry. At a concerted signal, masses of armed Indians from many a bye-way and many a house, rushed out and filled the streets.

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The wealthiest districts were almost in a moment invaded by troops of the revolutionary tribe, not a few of whom were brandishing lighted torches high above their heads.

"Death to the Spaniards! Death and destruction to the tyrants!" were the watch-words of the rebels.

Forthwith from the surrounding heights came trooping in a multitude of other Indians, hurrying to aid their brethren in the general uproar.

Imagination can scarcely realize the alarming aspect of the town at this moment. The revolutionists had penetrated in all directions. At the head of one party, Martin Paz was waving a black flag, and whilst some detachments were assaulting the houses that were doomed to pillage, he led his troop towards the Plaza-Mayor. Close beside him was the ferocious Manangani, bellowing out his infuriated orders.

But forewarned of the revolt, the soldiers of the Government had ranged themselves in a line along the front of the president's palace, and a general fusillade startled the insurgents as they approached. Taken thoroughly by surprise at this reception, and seeing many of their number fall, the Indians, frantic with excitement, made a tremendous rush upon the troops, and great was the *mêlée* that ensued. Both Martin Paz and Manangani performed prodigies of valour, and it was only marvellous how they escaped with their lives.

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It was of all things most essential that the palace should be taken, and that they should establish themselves within its walls.

"Forwards!" cried Martin Paz, as again and again he urged his followers to the assault.

Although they had been routed in many quarters, the besiegers nevertheless succeeded in causing the battalion of soldiers that guarded the front of the palace to beat a retreat, and Manangani had already placed his foot upon the flight of steps when he was brought to a sudden stand. The reserve troops behind had unmasked two pieces of artillery, and were preparing to open fire.

There was not a moment to lose; the battery must be captured before it could be brought into action.

"We two must do it," shouted Manangani vehemently to Martin Paz.

But Martin did not hear him; he was attending to a negro, who was whispering in his ear that the house of the Marquis Don Vegal was being plundered, and that there was every chance that the marquis himself would be assassinated.

Martin Paz began to retreat. To no purpose did Manangani rally him to the attack, and all at once the roar of the cannon was heard, and the Indians were swept down on every side.

"Follow me!" shouted Martin, and gathering a handful

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of companions around him, he succeeded in effecting a passage back through the line of soldiers.

It was a retreat that had all the evil consequences of an act of treachery. The Indians believed themselves abandoned by their chief, and in vain did Manangani urge them to renew the fight. A heavy fusillade threw them into utter disorder, and their rout was soon complete. Flames at a little distance attracted some of the fugitives to the work of pillage, but the soldiers pursued them with their swords, and killed them in considerable numbers.

Meanwhile Martin Paz had reached the residence of Don Vegal, and found it the scene of a furious struggle. Sambo was there taking the lead in the work of destruction. He had a double motive to urge him on; not only was he eager to plunder the Spaniard, but he was anxious to get possession of Sarah as a pledge of his son's fidelity.

The gate and the walls of the great courtyard were thrown down, and revealed the marquis, sword in hand, supported by his servants, and making a vigourous defence against the mob that was assailing him. His determined attitude and indomitable courage gave a certain sublimity to his appearance; he stood foremost in the fray, and his own arm had laid low the corpses that were on the ground before him.

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But altogether hopeless seemed the struggle he was making against the numbers of Indians, which were now recruited by the arrival of those who had been vanquished on the Plaza-Mayor. He was all but succumbing to the superior force of his opponents, when, like a thunderbolt, Martin Paz fell upon the insurgents in the rear, compelling them to face about, and then making his way through a shower of bullets to the marquis's side, he protected him with his own body from the blows which assailed him.

"Well done! well done! my friend!" shouted Don Vegal, clasping his defender's hand.

"Well done! well done! Martin Paz," repeated another voice that went to his very soul.

He recognized Sarah; her words gave redoubled vigour to his arm, and a veritable circle of bleeding figures lay stretched around him.

Sambo's troops meanwhile were forced to yield. Twenty times did the modern Brutus make his unsuccessful assaults upon his son, and twenty times did Martin Paz withhold his hand, which was able, if he would, to strike down his father.

Covered with blood, Manangani suddenly took his stand at Sambo's side, and spurred him on to vengeance.

"Your oath!" he cried. "Remember your oath! You have sworn to avenge the traitor's guilt upon his kinsman,

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upon his friends, upon himself! The time has come! See, here are the soldiers, and André Certa is with them!"

"Come on, then," said Sambo, with the laugh of a maniac; "come on now!"

Then leaving the courtyard, the two together made their way towards a body of troops who were hastening to the scene; they were aimed at by the advancing corps, but not in the least intimidated, Sambo made his way straight up to André Certa.

"You are André Certa," he said. "Your bride is in Don Vegal's house, and Martin Paz is going to carry her off to yonder mountains!"

He said no more, and both the Indians disappeared.

In this way Sambo had prevailed to bring the two mortal antagonists face to face. The soldiers were misled by the presence of Martin Paz, and rushed onwards to attack the house.

Maddened with fury was André Certa. As soon as he caught sight of Martin he made a dash upon him. The young Indian, as he recognized the half-breed, howled out a challenge of defiance, and quitted the flight of steps which he had so valiantly defended.

Here then stood the rivals: foot to foot, breast to breast, face to face. Keen was the survey that each took of the other. Neither friend nor enemy ventured to approach; all alike looked on in terror, and with bated

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breath. André first made a desperate lunge at Martin Paz, who had dropped his dagger; but, just in time to escape the blow, Martin had grasped André's uplifted arm. André tried in vain to disengage it, and Martin, wresting the poignard from his adversary's hand, plunged it into his very heart.

Martin threw himself into the arms of the marquis, who shouted impetuously,—

"Now quick, off, off to the mountains; wait no further bidding, but fly!"

At this instant old Samuel made his appearance, and flinging himself upon Certa's body, drew out a small pocket-book which the dead man had upon him. The action did not however escape the observation of Martin, who, turning upon the Jew, snatched the book from his hands, and turning over the leaves, extracted a paper, which, with an exclamation of joy, he handed to the marquis.

The marquis looked confounded as he slowly read the words,—

"Received of Señor André Certa the sum of 100,000 piastres: which I undertake to restore, if Sarah, whom I saved from the wreck of the 'San José,' should not prove to be the daughter and sole heiress of the Marquis Don Vegal."

"Daughter! my daughter!" exclaimed the bewildered

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Spaniard, and hurried towards the apartment where Sarah was concealed.

The girl had gone. Father Joachim was there, covered in blood, and could only utter a few disjointed words,—

"Sambo .... carried off .... Rio Madeira!"

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CHAPTER X.

"OFF," said Martin Paz, "let us be off!"

And without saying a word, the marquis quickly followed the Indian's lead. His daughter! Yes, at all hazards he must find his daughter.

Mules were brought without delay, and the two men mounted. They had buckled on large gaiters below their knees, and put on broad-brimmed straw hats to shade their heads; they carried pistols in their holsters, and their rifles were slung to their sides. Martin had fastened his lasso around him, attaching one end to the harness of his mule.

Well enough did he know every plain and every pass of that mountain-chain, and had no doubt as to the district into which Sambo would attempt to convey the maiden; his betrothed he longed to call her; but did he dare thus to think of Don Vegal's daughter?

One thought, one aim, occupied alike the Indian and the Spaniard, as they penetrated the gorges of the Cordilleras,

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darkened by the plantations of pines and cocoa-trees. They had left behind the cedars, the cotton-trees, and the aloes; they had passed beyond the fields planted with luzerne and maize. Occasionally some prickly cactuses would irritate the mules, and make them hesitate even upon the brink of the most dangerous precipices.

To traverse the mountains at this season was a perilous undertaking. The melting of the snow beneath the rays of the summer sun had swollen the streams to cataracts, and continually immense masses came rolling down from the peaks above into the chasms below.

But neither by day nor night did the father and the lover permit themselves to rest.

Reaching the summit of the Andes, 14,000 feet above the level of the sea, they found no more forests, no more vegetation. Repeatedly they were deluged by the terrible storms that break over the Cordilleras, and which in furious whirlwinds pile the snow in masses high above the mountain-peaks. Despite all his energies, the marquis was sometimes compelled to stop, and the powers of Martin's endurance were taxed to the uttermost to overcome the obstacles which the masses of snow presented to their progress.

They had reached the point, the very highest in the chain, and, worn out with fatigue, seemed ready to fall into that condition of despair which deprives men of all power

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to act. It required almost a superhuman effort to go on; but turning to the eastern declivity of the mountain-range, they fell upon traces of the fugitives, and with rekindled energy began the descent.

Reaching the almost boundless virgin-forests that cover the regions between Brazil and Peru, they made their way through woods that might have proved inextricable had not the practised sagacity of Martin stood them in good stead. Nothing escaped his observation; and the ashes of an extinguished fire, some vestiges of footsteps, some twigs broken off from the branches, and the character of certain fragments in the path—all attracted his experienced eye.

Don Vegal feared that his ill-fated daughter had been conveyed on foot over the crags and through the thickets, but the Indian pointed out to him some indications in the stony ground which were undoubtedly the impressions of an animal's feet; and, above all, the branches had been broken back in the same direction, and that at a height which could only be reached by a person that was mounted. The marquis too gladly yielded his conviction, and rejoiced to think that for Martin Paz there was no obstacle insurmountable, and no peril that he could not overcome.

At length one evening, positively worn out by fatigue, they made a halt. They had just come to the banks of a river. It was the upper stream of the Madeira, which the Indian knew perfectly well. Enormous mangroves

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overhung the water and connected themselves with the trees on the farther bank by creepers hanging in fanciful festoons.

The question at once arose about the fugitives. Had they gone up the stream, or followed it farther down? or had they contrived by any means to go straight across? It was all important to decide, and Martin took unbounded pains to follow up some footprints for a distance along the rocks till he came to a glade which was somewhat less dense than the surrounding woods. There he observed such indentations in the soil, as left him no doubt that a group of people had crossed the river at that very spot.

While he was still reconnoitring his position he caught sight of a black mass which seemed to be moving near an adjacent coppice. Seizing his lasso, he prepared for an attack; but he had not to advance many steps before he could see that it was a mule stretched upon the ground, and writhing in the last agonies of death. The poor brute had been struck down at a considerable distance from the spot where it was dying, as was evident from the long trail of blood it had left behind. In attempting to cross the river, no doubt the Indians had been unable to induce the animal to take the water, and, rather than leave it, they had despatched it, as they supposed, by a blow with a dagger. There was no longer any uncertainty as to the direction

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the fugitives had taken, and having satisfied himself on this point, Martin made his way back to his companion.

"To-morrow," he said, "perhaps our journey may be over."

"Nay, let us go on now," said the marquis.

"We must cross the river," replied Martin.

"Well, why not swim across at once?"

And without delay they proceeded to undress, and tying up their clothes in a bundle, that Martin proposed to carry over on his head, they made their way into the stream as noiselessly as possible, that they might not disturb any of the alligators that are abundant in all the rivers both of Peru and Brazil.

On arriving safely at the farther bank Martin Paz made it his first care to search for the track which the Indians must have made, but after a long search amidst the fallen leaves, and along the pebbly shore, he was able to discover nothing. Remembering, however, that the strength of the current had very probably made them drift away from a straight course, they reascended the bank for a considerable distance, when they came upon footprints so decided that they could not be mistaken.

It was manifestly the place where Sambo had effected his passage over the Madeira with his troop, which had been largely increased on its way. The truth was that the Indians of the mountains and the plains, who had been

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impatiently expecting the success of their insurrection, now learnt that it had miscarried through treachery; burning with rage, and finding that there was a victim on whom to vent their wrath, they had joined themselves to the old Indian's retinue.

The young girl had little consciousness of what was going on around her. She went forwards because there were hands that urged her forwards. Had they left her in the middle of the wilderness she would not have stirred a step to escape death. The memory of the young Indian would now and then flit across her mind, yet she was little otherwise than an inanimate burden upon the neck of the mule that carried her. Beyond the river, when two of the men dragged her along on foot, she left a trace of blood, marking every spot on which she trod.

It did not occur to Sambo, and therefore gave him no uneasiness that the dotted crimson streak was an index to point out the way they went. He was approaching the limit of his flight, and soon the rushing cataracts of the river were heard with their deafening roar.

The party halted at an insignificant village, comprising about a hundred huts, made of canes and clay. As they entered, a multitude of women and children greeted them with boisterous acclamations; but all their delight was changed to rage as soon as they heard of the supposed treachery of Martin Paz.

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Without quailing in any way before her enemies, Sarah surveyed them with a languid gaze. Though they insulted her with the vilest gestures, and assailed her ears with obloquy and savage threats, she was passive and unmoved.

"Where is my husband?" demanded one of the angry crones; "he has been killed through you."

"My brother too," added another, "he has not come back again; my brother has lost his life for you!"

Then the general chorus rose aloud,—

"Die! you shall die! and your flesh shall be given piecemeal to us all!"

And as they shouted, they brandished their knives aloft, waved torches of burning fire, took up stones of prodigious weight, and heaped repeated menaces on her head.

"Stop!" cried Sambo, "let us hear the judgment of the chiefs!"

In obedience to his order they stayed their demonstrations of revenge, and contented themselves with casting angry glances at the girl, who had sunk down for rest, bespattered as she was with blood, upon the stony margin of the stream.

Just below the village, the Rio Madeira, after being pent up between narrow confines, made its escape in a roaring cataract, which precipitated itself in a mighty volume to a depth of more than a hundred feet. The sentence passed

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on Sarah was that she should be cast into the flood immediately above the point from which the rapid made its start. At the first dawn of morning she was to be tied to a canoe of bark, and left to the mercy of the current of the Madeira.

That the execution of the sentence was deferred till the morrow, was not for the purpose of giving respite to the condemned victim, but only that she might be reserved for a night of terror and alarm.

The publication of the verdict was a signal for universal joy, and a frantic outburst of delight spread all around.

The night was spent in the wildest orgies. The Indians became intoxicated with their draughts of burning brandy; they danced in derisive revelry around the passive girl; they rushed about with dishevelled hair, and scoured the wilderness around, waving aloft great flaming pine-branches. Thus they continued till the early twilight of the morning; and thus, with yet frantic frenzy, they saluted the first rays of the rising sun.

The fatal hour arrived, and no sooner was the girl liberated from the stake to which she had been secured, than a hundred arms were voluntarily outstretched to bear her to the scene of punishment. The name of Martin Paz escaped her lips, and the outcry of hatred and revenge waxed louder than before. In order to reach the highest level of the stream, they had to clamber by the roughest

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paths up the rocks that overhung the bed of the river, so that when she arrived Sarah was besprinkled once again with blood. They found the bark canoe in readiness at about a hundred yards above the waterfall, and having laid their prisoner down they lashed her in her place with cords that cut deeply into her very flesh.

The cry of the multitude went up as the cry of one man,—"Vengeance!"

Whirling round and round, the canoe was carried rapidly along.

At this moment, upon the opposite bank, were seen two men, Martin Paz and Don Vegal.

"My daughter! my daughter!" shouted the father as he fell upon his knees.

The canoe swept onwards nearer to the fall. Mounted upon a rock, Martin Paz unwound his long lasso, which whistled round his head, and at the very instant when the canoe was being sucked into the eddy of the cataract, the long leather lash was uncoiled, and caught the canoe in its sliding noose.

"Death and destruction!" howled the horde of Indians, beside themselves with rage.

Martin Paz raised his tall figure to its fullest height, and gently drew the canoe, which had been hovering over the abyss, nearer and nearer to himself.

Suddenly an arrow came whizzing through the air, and

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Martin Paz, falling forwards into the frail bark that carried Sarah, was swallowed up with her in the whirlpool of the cataract.

Within a moment another arrow had pierced Don Vegal's heart.

It was bliss to Sarah to know that she and Martin Paz were joined in eternal nuptials, and the last thought of the maiden was that he was thus baptized into the faith which in her heart she loved.

END OF MARTIN PAZ.

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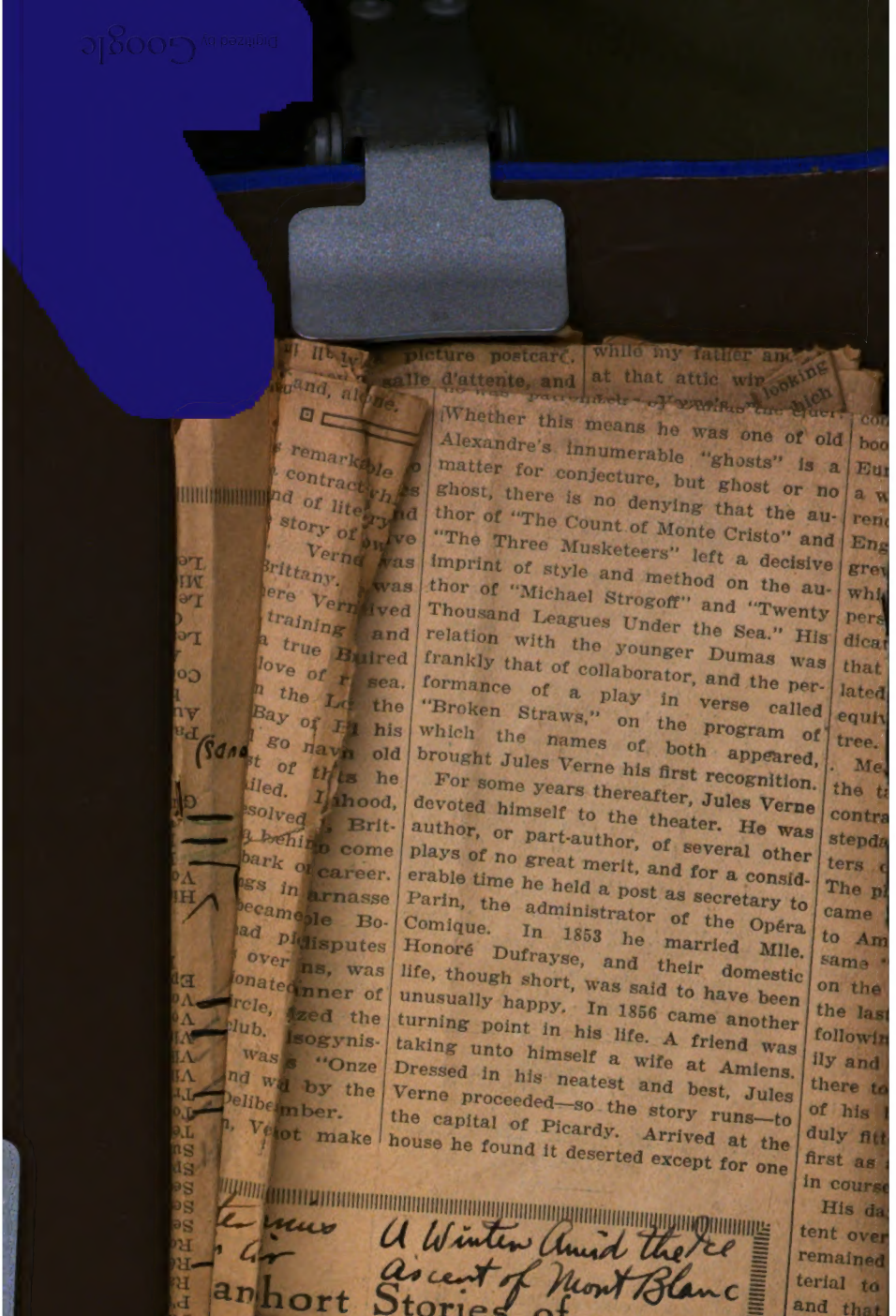

picture postcard. salle d'attente, and

while my father an at that attic wi looking

Whether this means he was one of old Alexandre's innumerable "ghosts" is a matter for conjecture, but ghost or no ghost, there is no denying that the author of "The Count of Monte Cristo" and "The Three Musketeers" left a decisive imprint of style and method on the author of "Michael Strogoff" and "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea." His relation with the younger Dumas was frankly that of collaborator, and the performance of a play in verse called "Broken Straws," on the program of which the names of both appeared, brought Jules Verne his first recognition.

For some years thereafter, Jules Verne devoted himself to the theater. He was author, or part-author, of several other plays of no great merit, and for a considerable time he held a post as secretary to Parin, the administrator of the Opéra Comique. In 1853 he married Mlle. Honoré Dufrayse, and their domestic life, though short, was said to have been unusually happy. In 1856 came another turning point in his life. A friend was taking unto himself a wife at Amiens. Dressed in his neatest and best, Jules Verne proceeded—so the story runs—to the capital of Picardy. Arrived at the house he found it deserted except for one

A Winter Amid the Ice
Ascent of Mont Blanc

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